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# The Price of Empire: Smuggling between New York and New France, 1700-1754

Eugene Richard Henry Tesdahl

University of Colorado at Boulder, [eugene.tesdahl@colorado.edu](mailto:eugene.tesdahl@colorado.edu)

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THE PRICE OF EMPIRE:  
SMUGGLING BETWEEN NEW YORK AND NEW FRANCE,  
1700-1754

By  
Eugene Richard Henry Tesdahl

B.A., Luther College, 2001  
M.A., Miami University, 2003

A thesis submitted to the  
Faculty of the Graduate School of the  
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This thesis entitled:  
The Price of Empire: Smuggling between New York and New France, 1700-1754  
written by Eugene Richard Henry Tesdahl  
has been approved for the Department of History

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Fred W. Anderson – Committee Chair

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Virginia D. Anderson – History

Date\_\_\_\_\_

The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signatories, and we  
Find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards  
Of scholarly work in the above mentioned discipline.

Tesdahl, Eugene Richard Henry (Ph.D., History)

The Price of Empire: Smuggling between New York and New France, 1700-1754

Thesis directed by Professor Fred W. Anderson

### ABSTRACT

Scholars have long noted the prevalence of smuggling on the imperial borderland between New France and New York during the first half of the eighteenth century, but to date none has examined at length the commercial, political, and cultural effects of what the French called *la traite illégale*. This dissertation attempts to fill this historiographical lacuna by investigating contraband commerce between Albany and Montreal from 1700 to 1754, with particular attention to the crucial role Native people played in the exchanges between French and British colonists. The Five (later Six) Nations Iroquois, and especially the Mohawks, set the terms of trade on the Lake George-Lake Champlain-Richelieu River corridor, and in so doing strongly influenced imperial politics and outcomes. Mohawk women acting variously as *gantowisas* (clan mothers), mediators, traders, and porters were of particular importance in facilitating the trade. This project reveals how Native and colonial actors once thought insignificant were in fact crucial to the operation of empires and their colonies in northeastern North America, and indeed throughout the Atlantic world.

Factors of geography, culture, economy, and inter-group relations structure the narrative of the contraband trade. *Kanienke*, or Iroquoia, encompassed millions of acres of land, but its heart lay along the 196-mile water route, a riverine highway, from Montreal on the St. Lawrence River to Albany on the Hudson. Among the families whose activities illuminate the illicit trade

in the early eighteenth century are those of John Hendricks Lydius, Robert Sanders, William Johnson, Catherine Dagneau, and the three daughters of Pierre Trottier-Desauniers: Marie-Anne, Marie-Madeleine, and Marguerite. All showed great ingenuity and resilience in pursuing the profits the trade afforded while generally (although not invariably) evading the punishments that imperial administrators and colonial governors could inflict on those traders whose activities became too visible, or whose success threatened to disrupt the interests of entrenched interests.

Although the trade emerged in its mature form in the decade following the Iroquois Grand Settlement of 1701, it was during the long peace between the end of the War of the Spanish Succession in 1713 and the commencement of the War of the Austrian Succession in 1744 that smuggling truly thrived in North America. King George's War, 1744-1748, witnessed the height of smugglers' importance on the Albany-Montreal corridor, particularly after the British capture of Louisbourg transformed the riverine highway into the main artery for goods, gifts, and information to French *habitants* and their Native allies. Following King George's War smugglers lost their resilience to government pressure. For a time thereafter, Iroquois porters, intermediaries, and traders continued a lucrative trade between Montreal and Albany, but the market and the climate had shifted; Lydius, one of the more influential British traders, shifted from contraband commerce to land speculation, while the Desauniers sisters, exiled from New France by a governor-general acting on the information from their competitors, relocated to France and succeeded in other dimensions of the Atlantic trade. Britain's decisive victory in the Seven Years' War ended *la traite illégale* by integrating what had been New France into the British Empire. As the trade between Albany and Montreal, which had been crucial to the redevelopment of Iroquois power in the first half of the eighteenth century when it was illegal, became legitimate, the Six Nations lost influence. The subordination of the Iroquois to British

authority in the 1760s paved the way to their subsequent ruin in the American Revolutionary era, when the Six Nations paid the ultimate price of empire.

#### NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

Several key terms within the dissertation warrant explanation. The main corridor of smuggling analyzed lay between Albany, New York, and Montreal in New France. The people of Albany at the time often referred to themselves as Albanians. In order to avoid modern confusion, I have adopted the spelling “Albanyans.” Observing the importance of sovereign First Nation peoples in this study, I have chosen to capitalize Native. The Mohawk village New Caughnawaga was founded east of Montreal at the old Oneida village of *Kantaké* in 1676 and moved to *Kanatakwente*, the site of another old Oneida town in 1716. Jesuit missionaries called the settlement Sault-Saint-Louis. At various times all these names, along with Caughnawaga, are used to describe the new location, on the southern bank of the St. Lawrence, southwest of the Island, the present location of the Kahnawake Mohawk community since 1716.

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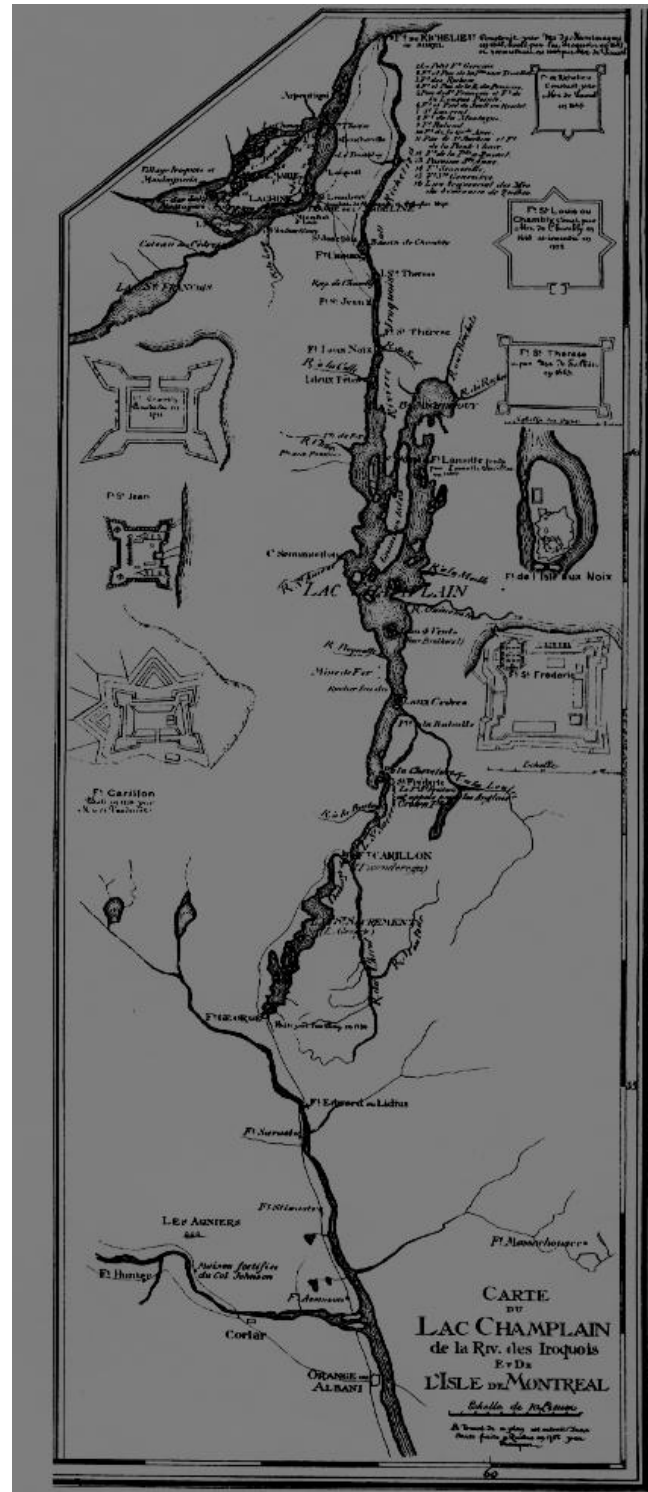
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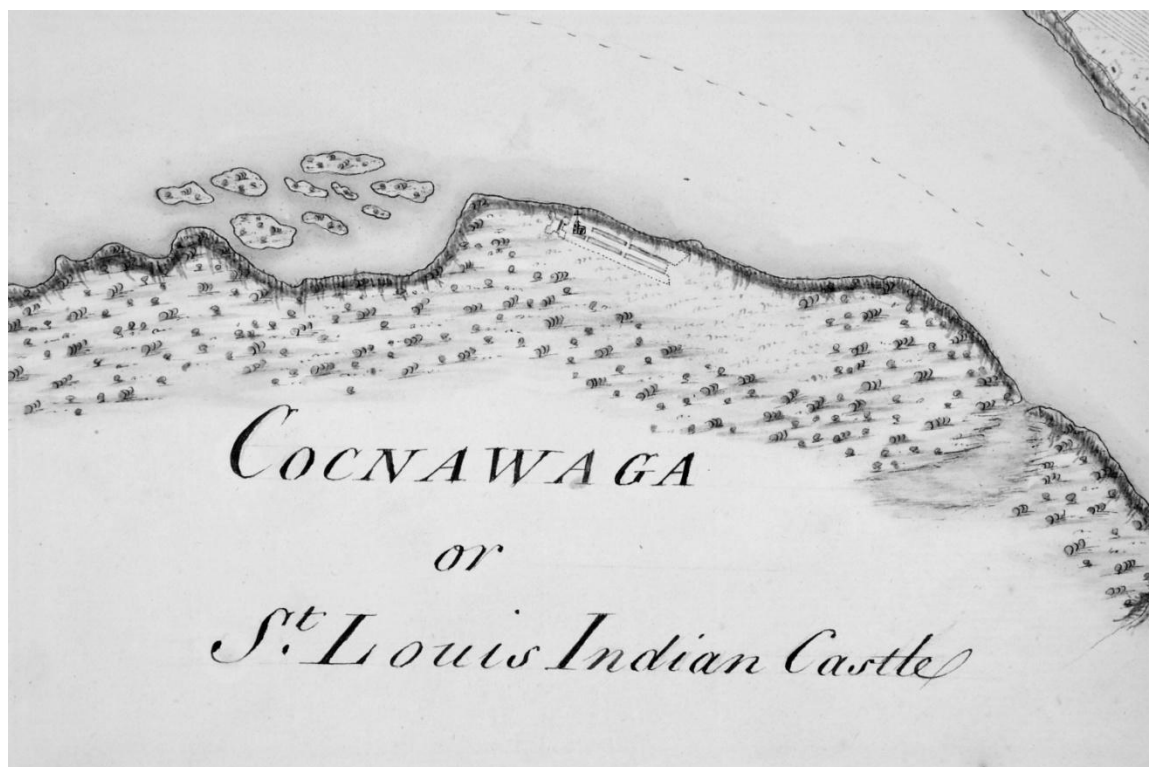
## FIGURE

A black and white reproduction of a handwritten signature in cursive script. The signature reads "John: H. Lydius". The letters are fluidly connected, with a prominent loop at the end of the word "Lydius". The signature is written on a light-colored background.

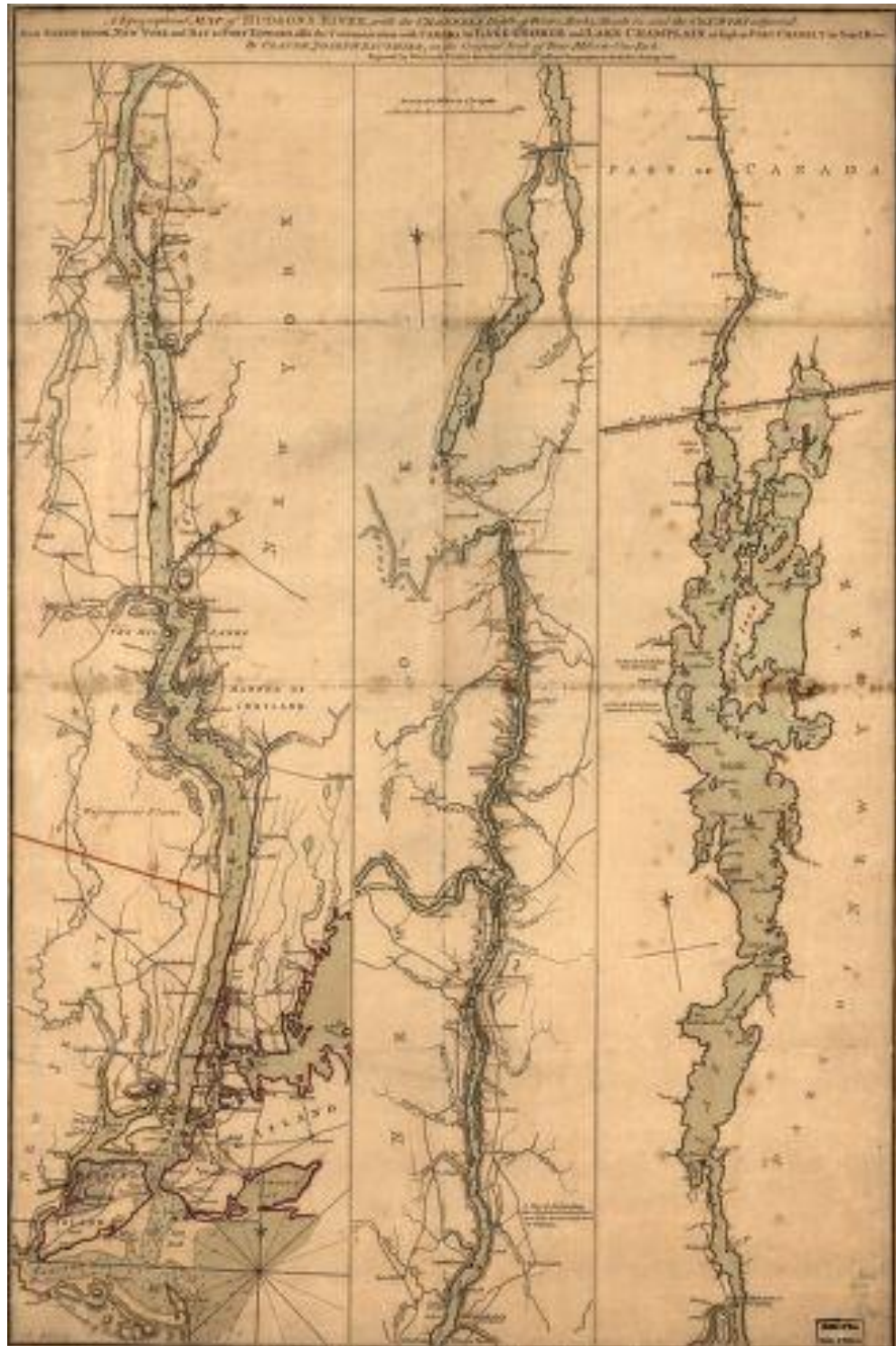
Figure 1. Autograph signature of John H. Lydius. Reproduced in Sir William Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, Milton W. Hamilton ed. (Albany: The University of the State of New York, 1962), II: XV.



Map 1. *Canada in the Eighteenth Century: Lake Champlain* (Reconstitution on a modern map after a map drawn by Franquet in 1752, with later additions: Archives of the Quebec Seminary in Marcel Trudel, *Atlas de la Nouvelle-France* (Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1973): 118-119.



Map 2. *Cocnawaga or Saint Louis Indian Castle*. *Murray Atlas of Canada*, Sheet 13, Parish of the Saut of St. Louis/Parish of La Chine. Used by permission of the Clements Library at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.



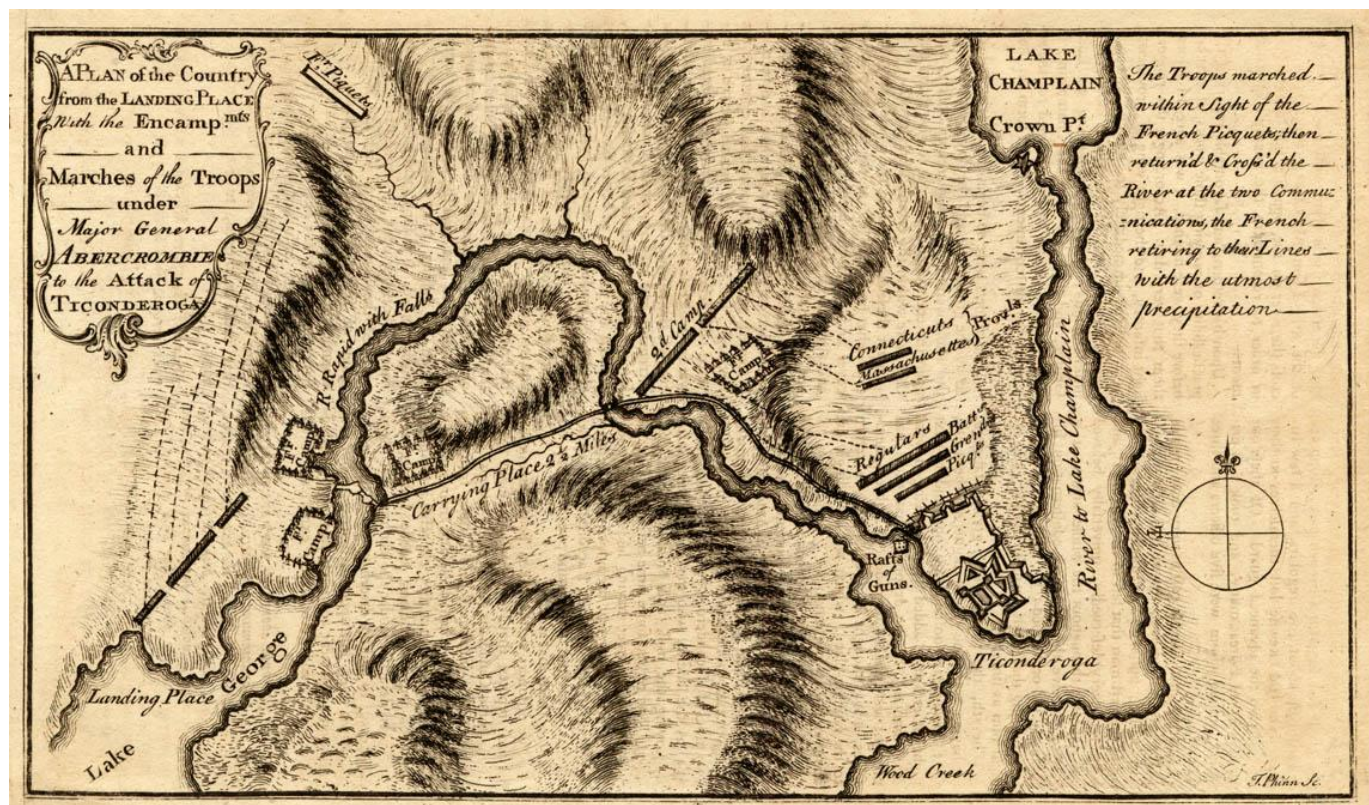
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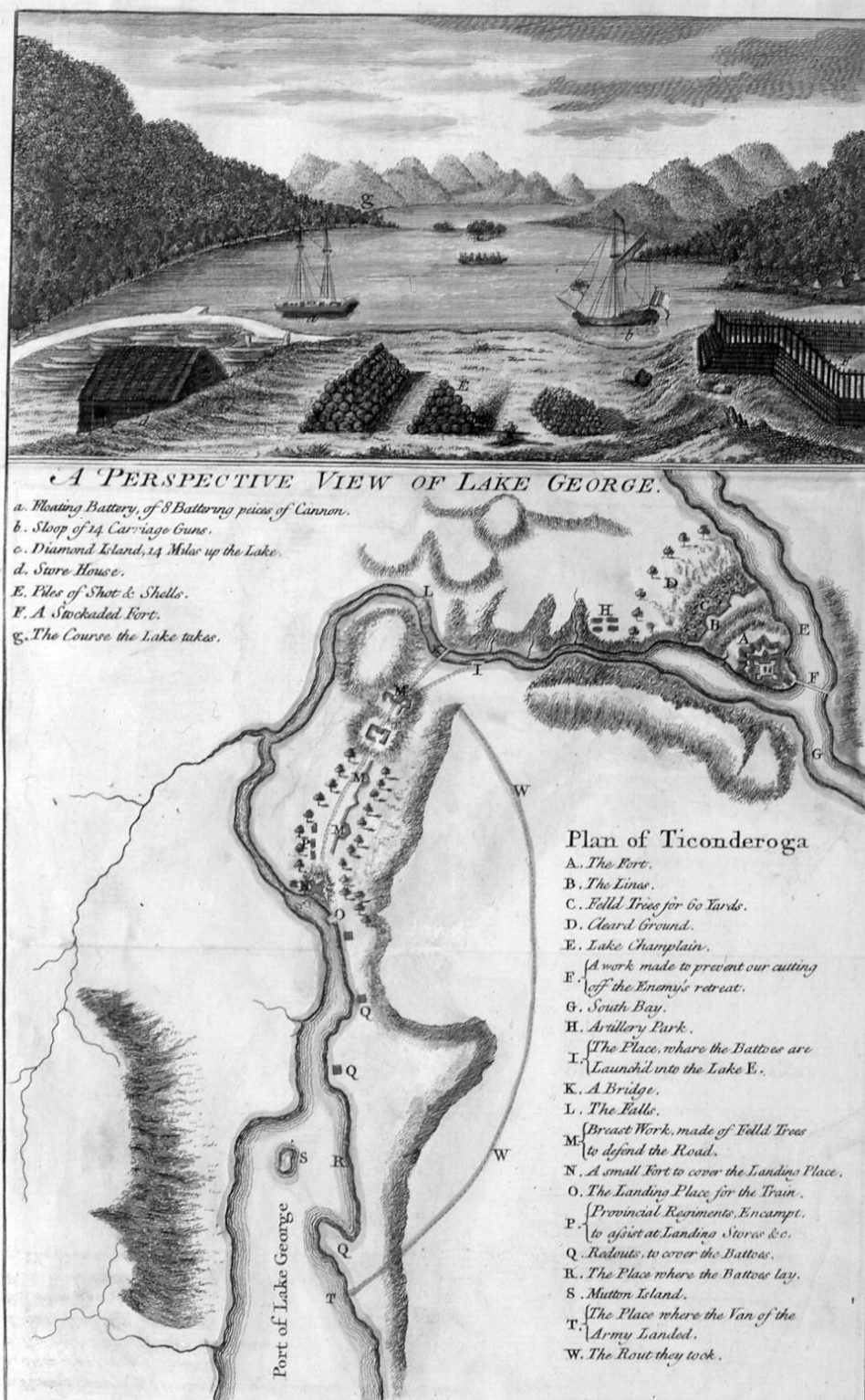


Map 4. Andrew Fraser. *A Map of the Landing Place to Fort Ticonderoga*. Manuscript Map. 1758. Used by permission of Maps Collection at Fort Ticonderoga Museum, Ticonderoga, New York.





Map 5. Thomas Phinn. *A Plan of the Country from the Landing Place to the Encampments and the Marches of Troops under Major General Abercrombie to the Attack of Ticonderoga*. Published in the *Scots Magazine*. Vol. 20 (August 1758): 437. Used by permission of Maps Collection at Fort Ticonderoga Museum, Ticonderoga, New York.



Map 6. Captain-Lieutenant Henry Skinner. *A Perspective View of Lake George and Plan of Ticonderoga*. Originally published in the *Universal Magazine*. Vol. 25 (November 1759): 265. Used by permission of the Maps Collection at Fort Ticonderoga Museum, Ticonderoga, New York.

## ABBREVIATIONS

ANBO	<i>American National Biography On-line</i>
BANQ	Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales du Québec
CAP	<i>Colonial Albany Social History Project</i>
CWS	<i>The Correspondence of William Shirley, Governor of Massachusetts and Military Commander in America, 1731-1760</i>
DCBO	<i>Dictionary of Canadian Biography On-line</i>
Dagneau, <i>Journal</i>	<i>Journal, 1729-1730, Catherine Dagneau, Veuve La Chauvignerie, Library and Archives of Canada</i>
JP	<i>The Papers of Sir William Johnson</i>
LAC	Library and Archives of Canada
NYHS	New York Historical Society
NYSA	New York State Archives
NYCD	<i>Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New-York: Procured in Holland, England, and France</i>
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
PISTARD	PISTARD Judicial Database of the Bibliothèque et Archives Nationale du Québec
Wraxall, IA	<b>Wraxall, Peter.</b> <i>An Abridgment of the Indian Affairs Contained in Four Folio Volumes : Transacted in the Colony of New York, from the Year 1678 to the Year 1751</i>



## INTRODUCTION

A charismatic twenty-one year-old fur trader named John Hendricks Lydius arrived in Montreal from Albany in 1725. He likely came north as an agent for an Albany fur merchant seeking a competitive advantage by trading directly with the Canadian Mohawks at the nearby réserve of New Caughnawaga. Lydius's knowledge of Native cultures, gift for languages, and (perhaps most importantly) his boyhood adoption into the Turtle clan of the Mohawk nation near Albany eased his entry into the Indian trade; he soon demonstrated the business acumen that brought him the success he coveted. By the winter of 1727, he had promise and resources enough to marry Geneviève Massé, daughter of Montreal trader Michel Massé. This was a promising match for a man with Lydius's ambitions, for Geneviève, a *métis* woman, descended from the Montour family, traders tied to both Algonquian and Iroquois clans.<sup>1</sup> Lydius's rise, however, put him at odds with Canadian competitors, especially three sisters from a prominent, well-connected merchant family, Marie-Madeleine, Marie-Anne, and Marguerite Desauniers. In September 1730 Canadian authorities arrested Lydius for trading without a permit. Soon he found himself deported to France and imprisoned at Rochefort, the victim of the Desauniers sisters' father, the powerful Montreal merchant Pierre Trottier-Desauniers. Within two years of his expulsion, however, the indefatigable Lydius had talked his way out of prison, re-crossed the Atlantic, and established himself at a trading post on the Hudson above Albany, where he traded English woollens, wampum, and other goods to the Mohawks for prime Canadian furs. Once ensconced in trade at a safe distance from Montreal, he became one of the Desauniers' main

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<sup>1</sup> The term *métis* only appears in the mid-eighteenth century to describe the offspring of "mixed" Native and French ethnic ancestry – a culturally hybrid people whom both Native and European cultures greeted with trepidation and ambivalence.

New York trading associates. And yet, despite his significance, his signature is the rare clue John Hendricks Lydius left behind (see fig. 1, page vii).

Concurrently in 1726 Marie-Madeleine, Marie-Anne, and Marguerite Desauniers embarked on an ambitious adventure of their own. These yet un-wed, tenacious daughters of one of New France's leading merchants, born to a life of privilege, opened a trading post among the Mohawk at New Caughnawaga, the Jesuit Mission at Sault-Saint-Louis. All these eventually married, but even then operated their post as independent entrepreneurs. The Desauniers sisters came to dominate the beaver trade with Albany, gaining commercial and political enemies as a consequence until they fell foul of the Governor-General of New France, Jacques-Pierre de Taffanel de La Jonquière, who had them deported to France in 1751. Like Lydius, the sisters were displaced but never defeated. That very year, they resumed trading in La Rochelle, on the French Atlantic coast, utilizing their family's connections to prosper in another corner of the Atlantic World.

The story of Lydius and the Desauniers sisters played itself out in the context of an exchange system that depended above all on the Mohawk people, or *Kanien'kehá:ka* ("people of the flint") of the Haudenosaunee, or Iroquois League. Kinship relations tied the Catholic Mohawks of New France to the traditionalist Mohawks of New York. People, information, and goods moved freely from between the two communities even before Europeans perceived their exchanges as having commercial potential. Identified as porters in the business records of the Canadian and New York fur traders, men and women like Taniscaumingue, Guerregendiague,<sup>2</sup> Sauvagesse Agnese, Marie-Magdeleine, and Conquasse<sup>3</sup> were essential to the Montreal-Albany

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<sup>2</sup> LAC, 19 November 1729 and 28 November 1729, Catherine Dagneau, veuve la Chauvignerie, Journal, Montreal, 1729-1730. C13A, vol.11.

<sup>3</sup> NYHS, Robert Sanders to Monsieur PMP, 19 October 1752 and Robert Sanders to Monsieur DND 17 October 1752, Robert Sanders, Letterbook, Albany, 1752-1758, Sanders Family Papers.

trade. While some were indeed mere transporters of pelts and trade goods, others were cultural intermediaries or traders in their own right. On the Canadian side most came from the French-allied, heavily Catholic village of New Caughnawaga, established as a *seigneurie* for the Mohawk in 1676 and later moved up the St. Lawrence to a location opposite Montreal (its current location) by 1716. The people of New Caughnawaga not only brought Canadian furs south to exchange for British manufactures at Albany but demonstrated the enterprise and innovation to take advantage of their position between competing European empires in America. In the first five decades of the eighteenth century the story of transnational trade in an inter-imperial borderland is theirs.<sup>4</sup>

These remarkable odysseys and careers open a window into a little-known topic, in the clandestine trade between the British and French empires in North America. Although scholars have long noted the existence of this trade, none has yet offered a thorough study of it based on French, English, and Native sources. This dissertation attempts to do so, exploring how smuggling in the Lake George-Lake Champlain-Richelieu River corridor between Albany and Montreal influenced the course of empire and relations between Natives and Europeans in northeastern North America during the first half of the eighteenth century. The story of the trade unfolds on ecological, familial, and imperial levels, each of which offers an unfamiliar view of how European empires interacted with one another and with Native societies in a critical period of North America's development.

Smuggling provided not just valuable commodities but crucial information to all parties at all times; during King George's War, 1744-1748, it did much more, supplying the goods and gifts that kept the French and their Native allies afloat in a conflict that would otherwise, in all

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<sup>4</sup> David Blanchard, *Seven Generations: A History of the Kanienkehaka* (Kahnawake: Kahnawake Survival School, 1980), 164.

likelihood, have ended badly for New France. Illicit trade frustrated officials in European metropolises, but in the North American interior it carried much greater meaning. The Iroquois men and women who transported and traded the goods did so as part of the exchanges that continually renewed kinship ties between the Mohawks of New Caughnawaga and those of the Mohawk Valley. These trips also demonstrated the new power and influence of the Caughnawaga Mohawks in French and British spheres. Smugglers profited, often inadvertently serving or thwarting colonial aims in the process. French power in North America would have withered following the British seizure of the fortress of Louisbourg in 1745, had not the contraband trade, and with it French ability to distribute gifts to Native allies, survived.

The illicit trade that linked Albany to Montreal intersected with larger circles of smuggling and trade that centered in such Atlantic ports as Louisbourg, Boston, New York City, Cape François on Saint-Domingue, La Rochelle, and London, connecting the Iroquois porters (many of them women) who moved along a seemingly isolated chain of rivers and lakes to a global web of commerce, conflict, and accommodation. Native actors made critical contributions to the events of the day, and smuggling was the mechanism by which they made their mark.

Trade and peace went hand in hand for the Iroquois and other Natives. Unlike European trade, which also served social, political, or diplomatic ends but was always essentially competitive in nature, Native trade was understood to create harmonious relationships. Trade renewed friendships; transmitted information; spurred marriages; and united families, clans, and villages. Trade also created alliances that could be called upon in war, which Native peoples largely understood in terms of violent, involuntary exchange, in which groups that had sustained losses from epidemic disease or the raids of their competitors regained spiritual power and

replenished by populations by taking captives from enemy groups. If European warfare centered on formally-defined periods when nation-states sought to eliminate their enemies, Native wars were endemic and aimed at increasing the chances that one's own group might survive despite the long demographic odds against it. Taken together, these differing understandings and aims profoundly influenced patterns of commerce, conflict, and compromise within the contraband trade on the Montreal-Albany corridor in the period 1700-1754.

On a basic level the clandestine trade between Montreal and Albany in the early eighteenth century was corresponded to the differing factor endowments of Canada and New York, and was governed by simple relationships of supply and demand. By 1700, New York's beaver populations were all but extinct, but the province's wealthy and well-established network of Anglo-Dutch fur traders enjoyed access to an abundance of high-quality British manufactures. Nouvelle France boasted robust fur supplies, dynamic Native trappers, and a small but rapidly-growing French population with a correspondingly robust demand for woolens and other products. Because mercantilist trade restrictions, aimed at protecting the economies of France and Britain, created levels of demand – for furs in New York and for manufactures in New France – that could not be satisfied legally, contraband commerce flourished on the borderland between the two empires. War and the threat of war disrupted illicit trade, increasing its risks and the profits that canny or fortunate traders could make from it. Periods of government restrictions on trade between French and British empires followed wars and punctuated these five decades. The story of smuggling emerges therefore as an elusive and complex one, in which European empires competed for influence in the North American interior and enabled the Haudenosaunee people to profit, prosper, and communicate in the space between empires.

Since the early seventeenth century the Iroquois Confederacy – then the most powerful military force in North America - had engaged in European squabbles and vice-versa. Smuggling became more than a way to gain wealth. During King George's War (1744-48) illicit trade transferred strategic information, solidified or weakened alliances, and strengthened kinship networks in important, heretofore underappreciated, ways. Smuggling accentuated the similarities between European and Native cultures, securing its place between the Mohawk and St. Lawrence Valleys for decades. Ultimately this cultural convergence brought Natives and competing Europeans close enough together that by 1754 war once again disrupted, this time permanently, clandestine trade between British and French America.

## HISTORIOGRAPHY

A combination of journals, daybooks, letters, reports, contracts, and other documents comprise the majority of the record illuminating contraband trade between New York and New France. Among these are two particularly valuable journals, one kept in New France in the late 1720s for the sole purpose of documenting the activities of smugglers for purposes of prosecution and the other a business record from New York in the early 1750s that assigned code names to maintain a record while protecting the merchant's illicit trading contacts from identification.<sup>5</sup> These rare records allow an unusually personal and detailed look into inter-imperial smuggling between New France and New York; the bulk of this dissertation's research, however, consisted of reconstructions made from fragmentary records, housed in a dozen

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<sup>5</sup> NYHS, Sanders Family Papers, *Robert Sanders Letterbook*, Albany, 1752-58, [Microfilm and original], Misc. Microfilms Reel 3. All translations from the original French are by author; LAC, Catherine Dagneau, Veuve la Chauvignerie, *Journal*, 1729-1730, all translations by author. For many years this journal has been underappreciated due to its improper cataloging on microfilm at the National Archives of Canada. It is still marked under Colonial Records for New Orleans rather than Montreal.

American and Canadian archives, which often speak only obliquely of a trade that was nothing if not clandestine.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to these conventional sources, a series of oral histories, conducted by the author with contemporary Haudenosaunee people, supplement the evidentiary base of this dissertation. These oral histories, used sparingly and in conjunction with documentary records, provided invaluable context for the dissertation, and were especially valuable in translating Mohawk words or names, understanding Haudenosaunee perspectives on land and trade, and appreciating the enduring relationship of Iroquois people with borders and trade. The Haudenosaunee people who cooperated in this project do not speak for their ancestors but do provide significant insight into the dynamic and enduring Haudenosaunee culture.<sup>7</sup>

Although what was known in New France as *la traite illégale* has seldom been studied at length or as an independent topic, historians have long acknowledged its existence and hinted at its importance. Frequent, if brief, mentions of John Henry Lydius and the Desauniers family suggested that they were central to a wider, deeper story; when subjected to more sustained scrutiny, the competition, collaborations, and tensions between them and the empires on the margins of which they functioned come into focus in such a way as to help bring together the

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<sup>6</sup> Primary archives consulted include: The Huntington Library, San Marino, California; The Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan; The New York Historical Society, New York, New York; The New York County Clerk's Office, Division of Old Records, New York, New York; The State Archives of New York, Albany, New York; The Albany Institute of History and Art, Albany, New York; The Kanienkehaka Center for History and Culture, Kahnawake, Quebec; Collection Baby at the University of Montreal, Montreal, Quebec; The Library and Archives of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario; and The National Archives of Quebec, Montreal, Quebec.

<sup>7</sup> A generous grant from the Bean Fund of the Department of History at the University of Colorado at Boulder permitted the author to conduct these oral history interviews between New York State, the Provinces of Quebec and Ontario, and Mohawk communities including Kahnawake and Akwesasne during the summers of 2010 and 2011. The author can never fully repay the generosity of his informants including: Lynn Delisle, Martin Loft, Ross *Kakwirakeron* Montour, Michael and Tonia Galban, Bill Loran, John Fadden, David *Kayietakeron* Fadden, Darren Bonaparte, the Continenta Horn-Miller family, Thomas Porter, Peter Jemison, Ronnie Reitter, Sue Ellen Hearne, and others. The Institutional Review Board of the University of Colorado at Boulder has determined that these oral histories do not constitute human subject research.

broader historiographies of the fur trade, North American empire, Native Americans, and women and gender relations.

Two articles most clearly outline the illegal fur trade between Montreal and Albany from 1700 to the 1750s. Jean Lunn's 1939 essay, "The Illegal Fur Trade Out of New France, 1713-1760," identified the Desautiers sisters in Caughnawaga and John Sanders in Albany as central players in the trade but did not extrapolate larger meanings from their activities; Lunn noted, but paid comparatively little attention to, the role of native intermediaries as historical actors.<sup>8</sup> Jan Grabowski returned to the topic more than a half-century later in "Les Amérindiens domiciles et la 'contrebande' des fourrures en Nouvelle-France" (1994), an article that focused, in a kind of reply to Lunn, on the Iroquois intermediaries in the trade, but said little of the roles played by French and British actors.<sup>9</sup> Several recent Ph.D. dissertations have also touched on the contraband trade focusing on the primacy of Iroquois people made the trade possible, rather than on the colonial traders on either end of the commercial corridor.<sup>10</sup> A comprehensive approach that encompasses all participants reveals a complex situation affected by war, peace, empire, and exchange. Stories of the Lydius and Desautiers families more fully illuminate the decades before and after King George's War and show how individuals utilized space between competing empires to profit and influence inter-imperial politics, often at their own peril.

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<sup>8</sup> Jean Lunn, "The Illegal Fur Trade Out of New France, 1713-1760," *Report of the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Society* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1939): 61-76.

<sup>9</sup> Jan Grabowski, "Les Amérindiens domiciles et la 'contrebande' des fourrures en Nouvelle-France," *Recherches Amérindiennes au Québec* 24.3 (1994): 45-52. See also Marc Guévin, "Le commerce Montréal-Albany sous le Régime français: histoire d'un phénomène commercial" (Master's thesis, Université de Montréal, 1995).

<sup>10</sup> Linda Breuer Gray, "Narratives and Identities in the Saint Lawrence Valley, 1667-1720" (Ph.D. Diss., McGill University, 1999); Gretchen Lynn Green, "A New People in an Age of War: The Kahnawake Iroquois, 1667-1760" (Ph.D. Diss., The College of William and Mary, 1991); Matthew Robert Laird, "The Price of Empire: Anglo-French Rivalry for the Great Lakes Fur Trades, 1700-1760" (Ph.D. Diss., The College of William and Mary, 1995); Jon Parmenter, "At the Woods Edge: Iroquois Foreign Relations, 1727-1768" (Ph.D. Diss.: University of Michigan, 1999).



The stories of Lydius and the Desauniers show how trade and war often blurred the bounds between French, English, and Native empires rather than driving a wedge between them. Eric Hinderaker, Alan Taylor, and Richard White have all examined interests and tensions for English, French, and Native parties in the imperial borderlands skirting the Great Lakes.<sup>11</sup> Their studies emphasize how England's 1763 victory in the Seven Years' War remade North American politics and trade for numerous Indian nations and their French and British allies. King George's War figures only peripherally in these accounts and hence remains ripe for investigation. In particular it remains to be seen how events like the 1745 capture of the French fortress of Louisbourg affected Franco-Indian relations in the North American interior and redirected trade from the St. Lawrence to the Hudson Valley.

Recent historians have built a conceptual framework into which this dissertation dovetails. Jon Parmenter and Daniel Richter have recently published monographs more deeply illuminating the story of Haudenosaunee peoples along the riverine highway between Albany and Montreal both prior to and during European encroachment on the region.<sup>12</sup> Theodore Corbett, Thomas Truxes, and Steven Eames have made efforts to better illuminate smuggling, empire, and warfare in the early modern Atlantic World.<sup>13</sup> Taiaiake Alfred and David Blanchard

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<sup>11</sup> Eric Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires: Constructing Colonialism in the Ohio Valley, 1673-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Alan Taylor, *The Divided Ground: Indians, Settlers, and the Northern Borderland of the American Revolution* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006); Richard White *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

<sup>12</sup> Jon Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534-1701* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2010); Daniel Richter, *Before the Revolution: America's Ancient Pasts* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011).

<sup>13</sup> Theodore Corbett, *A Clash of Cultures on the Warpath of Nations: The Colonial Wars in the Hudson-Champlain Valley* (Fleischmanns, N.Y.: Purple Mountain Press, 2002); Thomas Truxes, *Defying Empire: Trading with the Enemy in Colonial New York* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); Steven C. Eames, *Rustic Warriors: Warfare and the Provincial Soldier on the New England Frontier, 1689-1748* (New York: New York University Press, 2011).

have more deeply explored the rich history of New Caughnawaga (Kahnawake), and touched on the illicit trade of the early eighteenth century.<sup>14</sup>

Gender is essential to understand the limited ground between French, British, and Iroquois worlds and the women who thrived there. Works by Jan Noel, Susan Sleeper-Smith, Jennifer Brown, and Sylvia Van Kirk provide an essential context for understanding the options and actions of the Desautiers and Madame Geneviève Lydius.<sup>15</sup> The Desautiers and Lydius families used male and female gender expectations in both European and Native contexts to serve personal interests; in the process they developed lives and livelihoods between Native and European cultures. Their positions between cultures made them both versatile and vulnerable.<sup>16</sup>

Smuggling on the imperial borderlands of New France and New York produced more than economic ramifications. Contraband trade knit together a world of familial, transnational, and trans-Atlantic relationships that held great meaning on a local level and had lasting significance in an imperial context. Smuggling offered Mohawk women and men, along with a cast of colonial smugglers, wealth, notoriety, and, at times, infamy. Smugglers' lives disclose the functioning of empires in relation to Native peoples on an early American borderland in times of peace and war, suggesting that those empires were in fact the organic creations arising from many groups' interests and activities, creating a far more complex picture than might be inferred from the mercantilist regulations that supposedly governed relationships between them.

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<sup>14</sup> Gerald R. (Taiaiake) Alfred, *Heeding the Voices of Our Ancestors: Kahnawake Mohawk Politics and the Rise of Native Nationalism* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1995); David Blanchard, *Seven Generations: A History of the Kanienkehaka* (Kahnawake: Kahnawake Survival School, 1980).

<sup>15</sup> Jennifer Brown, *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980); Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870* (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980). These works generally deal with the Canadian Fur Trade Era, 1780-1840, but they provide an invaluable archetype of the roles native and métis women played in terms of kinship, negotiation, and trade. Jan Noel, "'Nagging Wife' Revisited: Women and the Fur Trade in New France," *French Colonial History* 7 (2006): 45-60; Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and Frenchmen: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001).

<sup>16</sup> Louise Dechêne, *Habitants and Merchants in Seventeenth-Century Montréal*, trans., Liana Vardi, (Montréal; Buffalo: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992).

Smuggling could be both asset and liability to competing empires along the riverine highway from Montreal to Albany; most of all, however, it was a way of life for the peoples of the borderland, who in flexible and ingenious ways carved out an independent existence for themselves between empires that depended upon them in ways that few if any metropolitan imperial administrators fully understood.

## CHAPTER I

A RIVERINE HIGHWAY:  
TRADE AND TRAVEL BETWEEN THE MOHAWK AND ST. LAWRENCE VALLEY

## INTRODUCTION

[June the 25<sup>th</sup> 1750]

Through the Wilderness on Foot. We had intended to proceed close up to Ft. Nicholson in the canoe, which would have been a great convenience to us; but we found it impossible to get over the upper falls, the canoe being heavy, and there being scarcely any water in the river except in one place where it flowed over the rock, and where it was impossible to get up on account of the steepness and the violence of the fall. We were accordingly obliged to leave our canoe here, and to carry our baggage through unfrequented woods to Fort Anne, on the river Woodcreek, which is a space from forty-three to fifty English miles, during which we were quite exhausted through the excess of heat. Sometimes we had no other way of crossing deep rivers than by cutting down trees, which stood on their banks, and throwing them across the water. All the land we passed over this afternoon was rather level, without hills or stones, and entirely covered with a tall and thick forest in which we continually met trees which had fallen down, because no one made the least use of the woods. We passed the next night in the midst of the forest, plagued with mosquitoes, gnats and woodlice, and in fear of all kinds of snakes.

June the 26<sup>th</sup>

Early this morning we continued our journey through the woods along the Hudson River. There was an old path leading to Fort Nicholson, but it was overgrown with grass that we discovered it only with great difficulty. In some places we found plenty of raspberries, and some of which were already ripe.

Fort Nicholson is the place on the eastern shore of the Hudson where a wooden fortification formerly stood. We arrived there some time before noon and rested a while. Colonel Lydius resided here till the beginning of the last war, chiefly with a view of carrying on a greater trade with the French Indians; but during the war, they burnt his house and took his son prisoner. The fort was situated on a plain, but at present the place is all overgrown with a thicket. It was built in the year 1709, during the war which Queen Anne carried on against the French, and it was named after the brave English general Nicholson [Sir Francis Nicholson in North America 1705 to 1728]. It was not so much a fort as a storehouse to Fort Anne. In the year 1711, when the English naval attempt upon Canada miscarried, the English themselves set fire to this place. The soil hereabouts seems to be pretty fertile. The river Hudson passed close by here.

Some time in the afternoon we continued on our journey. We had hitherto followed the eastern shore of the Hudson and gone almost due north; but now we left it, and went E.N.E. or N.E. across the woods in order to come to the upper end of the river

Woodcreek, which flows to Fort St. Frederic, where we might go in a boat from the former place.<sup>17</sup>

The “wilderness” described in these diary entries was observed by the Swedish botanist Pehr Kalm on his journey from Albany to Montreal during the summer of 1750. The Swedish Academy of Science intended Kalm’s 1747-1751 expedition to yield specimens of flora and fauna suitable for the Scandinavian environment. King Frederik I hoped that Kalm’s journey would revolutionize Swedish agriculture and manufacturing, allowing Sweden to regain its status as a world power. Nature engrossed Kalm; yet the scenes he recorded of rivers, lakes, forests, and the people who travelled them offer much more than mere picturesque detail.<sup>18</sup>

The ruined Fort Nicholson that Kalm described and the Colonel Lydius who had traded there before the recent war, in particular, were part of a much larger story of illicit trade that had long been carried on between Albany and Montreal.<sup>19</sup>

Besides this trade at Oswego, a number of Indians come to Albany from several places especially from Canada; but from this latter place, they hardly bring anything but beaver skins. There is a great penalty in Canada for carrying furs to the English, that trade belongs to the French West India Company. Notwithstanding that the French merchants in Canada carry on a considerable smuggling trade. They send their furs by means of the Indians to their agent at Albany, who purchases them at the price which they have fixed upon with the French merchants. The Indians take in return several kinds of cloth, and other goods, which may be bought here at a lower rate than those which are sent to Canada from France.<sup>20</sup>

When Kalm wrote, the trade was nearly at a standstill as a result of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle and the current state of relations between the French and British empires. The

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<sup>17</sup> Pehr Kalm, *Travels in North America*, The English Version of 1770, ed. and trans., Adolph Benson, Vols. I-II (New York: Wilson-Erickson Inc., 1937), 360-361.

<sup>18</sup> Ian K. Steele, *Betrays: Ft. William Henry and the “Massacre”* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 3-8; Kalm, *Travels in North America*, Introduction, vii-xiii.

<sup>19</sup> Russel P. Bellico, *Chronicles of Lake Champlain: Journeys in War and Peace* (Fleischmanns, N.Y.: Purple Mountain Press, 1999), 52-54; Gilles Havard and Cécile Vidal. *Histoire de l'Amérique française* (Paris: Flammarion, 2003) ; Jacques Mathieu, *La Nouvelle-France: Les Français en Amérique du Nord, XVIe et XVIIIe siècle* (Québec et Paris: Presses de l'Université Laval et Berlin, 1991).

<sup>20</sup> Kalm, *Travels in North America*, 343.

watercourses and overgrown traces of paths and portages he described, however, were part of a riverine highway that had linked the Hudson River to the St. Lawrence for generations. The commerce that had moved along it – illicit according to imperial policies – was part of the cultural and economic life that Native people had carried on in the region since time out of mind. The story that unfolded during the early eighteenth century was also one with a rich background in the interplay between environment and humanity. Kalm's environmental understanding captured a critical moment in a complicated narrative that began decades before. It was an imperial story in which Iroquois, French, Dutch, and British actors had played equally critical roles, framed by the factors of geography, culture, economy, and inter-group relations that bound them all together.<sup>21</sup>

## GEOGRAPHY

The physical environment deeply influenced cultural, commercial, historical, and political landscapes along the riverine highway. Rivers and lakes provided the means of transportation, communication, and trade between the St. Lawrence and Hudson River Valleys. The Iroquois called this land *kanienke* – the land of the Haudenosaunee or Iroquois people – a place at the heart of Turtle Island, formed when Sky Woman had fallen from the heavens and land was first created. Speakers of Iroquoian languages, and Algonquian-speakers like the Mahicans, populated this region for centuries. The corridor consisting of Lake George, Lake Champlain, and the Richelieu River, connected the Hudson Valley and the St. Lawrence River,

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<sup>21</sup> Allen Penfield Beach, *Lake Champlain as Centuries Pass* (Basin Harbor, V.T.: Basin Harbor Club and Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, 1994), 28.

permitting the Haudenosaunee to carry on communication, trade, and war with neighboring groups (see map 1, page viii; map 3, page x).<sup>22</sup>

Long before European onlookers labeled trade between these regions as smuggling, Mohawk women made annual journeys between Iroquois towns in the Mohawk Valley and others in the St. Lawrence drainage. Although through European eyes Iroquois domain geographically separated *La Nouvelle France* from the English colony of New York, it in fact encompassed portions of each, as well as the network of waterways that linked them. The Iroquois viewed the two imperial neighbors as guests in *kanienke*, not as landlords. They not only survived between English and French colonies; they thrived there. Iroquois men and women utilized the riverine highway to renew kinship ties, both real and fictive, and to carry on the trade that was essential to binding together communities throughout the region. Mohawks – the most powerful and influential of the Five Nations – controlled everything that passed along this water route that ultimately connected New York harbor with the Gulf of St. Lawrence.<sup>23</sup>

When Kalm saw *kanienke*, he thought he was looking at a wilderness men had barely touched, but a more accurate description historically would recognize that this was a carefully managed ecosystem which had supported Haudenosaunee society for centuries. Native horticulturalists combined hunting, fishing, and gathering with the cultivation of maize, beans, and squash in a sophisticated use of the environment. Since time out of mind, footpaths had crisscrossed dense hardwood and pine forests between the clearings in which Iroquois villages and their crop fields stood. By the sixteenth century Mohawk settlements with populations in the

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<sup>22</sup> Jon Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534-1701* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2010), xlii-xliv; Barbara Alice Mann, *Iroquoian Women: The Gantowisas* (New York: Peter Lang, 2000), 57; Gerald R. (Taiaiake) Alfred, *Heeding the Voices of Our Ancestors: Kahnawake Mohawk Politics and the Rise of Native Nationalism* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1995), 36-38.

<sup>23</sup> Alfred, *Heeding the Voices of Our Ancestors*, 36-38; Bernard Bailyn, *Atlantic History: Concept and Contours* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005), 62-63.

hundreds, surrounded by carefully tended fields, punctuated the forests. European incursions in the following century radically altered life there; what they could not change was the geography that defined the zone and gave its Native inhabitants control over movement through it.<sup>24</sup>

Rivers and lakes between the Hudson and the St. Lawrence made travel, trade, and conflict possible for Iroquoian and Algonquian peoples. The Hudson flowed steadily from its headwaters near what is now Lake George in upstate New York 315 miles to its estuary near Manhattan Island and the Atlantic. This waterway, more than any other, united some Indian nations while separating others in the centuries before European arrival. The Hudson River, especially near its confluence with the Mohawk River, held great strategic importance separating eastern from western Indian nations. This spot came to dictate the fortunes of Iroquois, French, and English worlds in the early eighteenth century.<sup>25</sup>

Several details make the orientation and significance of the landscape clear for this story. A distance of 196 miles separated the confluence of the Mohawk and Hudson Rivers (eventually the site of Albany) from the St. Lawrence River Valley. The Hudson River-Lake George-Lake Champlain-Richelieu River-St. Lawrence River corridor was by no means unbroken or simple to navigate. Travelers plied rivers, creeks, and the enormous Lakes George and Champlain, each with its own challenges, to get from the Hudson to the St. Lawrence.

Changes in elevation made travel north much easier and quicker than travel southward. Albany lay at approximately 148 feet above sea level and Montreal at 40 feet above sea level, but even greater fluctuations in elevation lay along the riverine highway.<sup>26</sup> Fifty miles north of

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<sup>24</sup> Theodore Corbett, *A Clash of Cultures on the Warpath of Nations: The Colonial Wars in the Hudson-Champlain Valley* (Fleischmanns, N.Y.: Purple Mountain Press, 2002), 25-26.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 25-26.

<sup>26</sup> U.S. Geological Survey [referred to hereafter as USGS] *The National Map* (2011) <http://nationalmap.gov/> [accessed October 19, 2011]; USGS, *National Geographic Names Index* (2011) [Albany, New York – elevation: 148ft/45m; Lake George – elevation: 318ft/97m; Lake Champlain – elevation: 95ft/29m] <http://geonames.usgs.gov/pls/gnispublic/> [accessed 19, October 2011]; Elevation data is gathered from the *National*



present-day Albany, a *portage* (what the English termed a carrying place) linked the Hudson River to the north-flowing Wood Creek which flowed into Lake George (see map 4, page xi; map 5, page xii; map 6 page xiii). Portages were in general strategic places; this particular one was only about one-third of a mile long, but it mattered more than most because it controlled access to both the Hudson and St. Lawrence Valleys. Time and again Native peoples as well as Europeans contended for control of this spot.<sup>27</sup>

Traveling either direction from the Wood Creek portage was possible, but the current and fall in elevation favored travel toward the St. Lawrence. Prior to European encroachment, the currents favored Iroquois movement to the North, not Algonquian expansion to the South. In the eighteenth century, Iroquois and English-allied traders and porters moved goods, people, and information northward more easily than Native or French parties moved beaver skins southward. In time, the direction of the current and its shift in direction just north of Albany attained surprising significance.<sup>28</sup>

Travelers encountered a substantial body of water, 32 miles long, to the north of the Wood Creek portage. The French called it Lac St. Sacrement; in 1755 the English renamed it Lake George, the name it retains on American maps to this day.<sup>29</sup> To the Mohawks, then and now, it was Kania'da'galoideh<sup>30</sup> or Andiatarocté.<sup>31</sup> Just north of Lake George lay the most

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*Elevation Data Set* (2011) <http://ned.usgs.gov/> [accessed October 19, 2011]; *The Atlas of Canada*, (2010) Toporama, [Kahnawake – elevation: 79ft/24m; Montreal – elevation range between 62ft/19m and 20ft/6m] Natural Resources Canada <http://atlas.nrcan.gc.ca/site/english/maps/topo/map> [accessed October 19, 2011]. An average of 40feet is used as Montreal's elevation at the riverside.

<sup>27</sup> USGS, *National Water Quality Assessment Program* (2009) [The Hudson River Basin] <http://ny.water.usgs.gov/projects/hdsn/fctsht/su.html> [accessed October 19, 2011]; Archer Butler Hulbert, *Portage Paths: The Keys of the Continent* (Cleveland, Ohio: A.H. Clark Co., 1903), 127-148.

<sup>28</sup> *The Atlas of Canada*, (2010) Toporama, [Kahnawake – elevation: 79ft/24m; Montreal – elevation range between 62ft/19m and 20ft/6m] Natural Resources Canada <http://atlas.nrcan.gc.ca/site/english/maps/topo/map> [accessed October 19, 2011].

<sup>29</sup> America's Historic Lakes: The Lake George and Lake Champlain Historical Site: <http://www.historiclakes.org> [accessed March 5, 2011].

<sup>30</sup> Bill Loran, Mohawk Nation, Interview by author, Kanatsiohereke Mohawk Community, New York [Near Fonda, New York], (Conducted during the Kanatsiohereke Strawberry Festival organized by Thomas Porter) June 25, 2011.

significant drop in elevation along the riverine highway near a place called Ticonderoga.<sup>32</sup> The narrow and swift La Chute River fell approximately 220 feet over the course of its three and a half miles between Lake George to the south and Lake Champlain to the North.<sup>33</sup> Rapids and falls over jagged flint beds made the passage both formidable and attractive. Paleo-Indians once gathered flint for tools and weapons at these beds. Beginning in the seventeenth century, colonists and modern Native nations paused here during the 196-mile trek between the two great valleys to knap musket flints and to trade. The dangerous current and drop in elevation here favored passage north towards an even larger body of water.<sup>34</sup>

Lake Champlain, 120 miles in length and 12 miles wide at its widest point, formed the boundary between the homeland of Abenakis to the East (who called it Biawbagok, the "waters in between") and that of the Mohawks to the west (who called it Caniadari Guarunte, "the door to the country"). Native and European travelers in canoes or bateaux hugged the shorelines of these immense lakes to avoid capsizing in sudden squalls. At its northern end, Lake Champlain emptied in the Richelieu River, which continued the final seventy-eight miles to the St. Lawrence, emptying into the great waterway between the future sites of Quebec City and Montreal.<sup>35</sup>

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Loran is one of few Haudenosaunee elders today who endured Indian boarding school and retained much of his Native language. He encourages the use of traditional Mohawk language and is a longtime cultural demonstrator and artist. He resides in Awkesasne, New York. Linguistically both of these are dialectical variations of the same word for the same place, Lake Champlain. Another definition is "swelling waterway."

<sup>31</sup> "Here the lake closes." America's Historic Lakes: The Lake George and Lake Champlain Historical Site: <http://www.historiclakes.org> [accessed March 5, 2011].

<sup>32</sup> Bill Loran, Interview by author. Ticonderoga [dey-gania-de-loh-guh] has various spellings and definitions including "Land between Lakes," "Doorway/opening," or "Gets wider."

<sup>33</sup> USGS, *National Geographic Names Index*, [Albany, New York – elevation: 148ft/45m; Lake George – elevation: 318ft/97m; Lake Champlain – elevation: 95ft/29m] <http://geonames.usgs.gov/pls/gnispublic/> [accessed 19, October 2011]; Elevation data is gathered from the *National Elevation Data Set* <http://ned.usgs.gov/> [accessed October 19, 2011]. The La Chute leaves Lake George at 318 feet and empties into Lake Champlain at 95 feet.

<sup>34</sup> Corbett, *Clash of Cultures*, 15.

<sup>35</sup> Esther M. Swift, *Vermont Place-Names: Footprints of History* (Brattleboro, Vt.: S. Greene Press, 1977), 257-262; Amy B. Demarest, *This Lake Alive!: An Interdisciplinary Handbook for Teaching and Learning about the Lake Champlain Basin* (White River Junction, Vt.: Chelsea Green Publishing, 1999), 82-86.

The riverine highway, however, did not follow the Richelieu all the way to the St. Lawrence. For centuries Native peoples instead employed another sizeable portage in combination with smaller streams and lakes that deposited travelers at a more ideal location than the confluence. Travelers departed the Richelieu River at what would become the city of Chambly. This bend and rapids in the Richelieu at Chambly made a likely spot for pausing before plotting a more direct route to the islands of Montreal. Natives congregated in this location for many years. Ultimately Montreal grew on the island which the Mohawk called Kawennote Tiohtià:ke, “island where the people divide.”<sup>36</sup> New Caughnawaga, an Iroquois satellite, ultimately stood on the shore of the St. Lawrence by the end of the seventeenth century.<sup>37</sup>

This was the physical landscape of the 196 miles between the Mohawk and St. Lawrence Valleys. It was no seamless thoroughfare and yet it charted the most direct course between key river confluences. These routes had offered Iroquois, Mahegan, Abenaki, and other peoples the ability to travel and trade for centuries. They gained unprecedented significance in the age of European interaction. Albany and Montreal brought even more importance to the Mohawk and St. Lawrence Valleys, especially because here ships could retrieve goods from canoe brigades for the final journey to Europe. Traversing these 196 miles, however, required knowledge of the route, strong effort, and stamina. The riverine highway was the most direct route to transport information, people, and goods between Manhattan Island and the St. Lawrence Valley, but it was slower than the Atlantic routes ships took between the two points.

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<sup>36</sup> Alfred, *Heeding the Voices of Our Ancestors*, 28; Bill Loran, Mohawk Nation, Interview by author. Another name for Montreal, *Gio-ga-geh*, meaning “Trip’s end” or “Trail’s end,” was developed during the fur trade and proved useful in describing the riverine highway and corridor linking Albany and Montreal.

<sup>37</sup> Bill Loran, Mohawk Nation, Interview by author. Loran explained, “Kahnawake [New Caughnawaga] *gon-o-luh-quah* ‘priceless medicine from the creator’ has a long tradition of trade. During the 1960s there was a rebirth of tradition Mohawk culture there.”

Smuggling provided both blessings and challenges to English, Anglo-Dutch, and French officials. Native traders, middlemen, and porters augmented their routines only slightly to satisfy the additional demands that European traders placed on a Native trade network that had functioned long before the French, Dutch, and English appeared on the scene. European merchants and traders recognized the potential to increase efficiency by circumventing unenforceable imperial trade restrictions to meet local demands, profiting in the process. This familiar water route remained relatively unremarkable until deeper convergence between Mohawk, French, and English cultures grew by the early eighteenth century.

## CULTURE

The most important aspect of culture as it relates to this study is exchange. Prior to European arrival the exchange of goods among Native people – trade – was not aimed at reaping profit. Trade represented friendship and kinship, in both real and fictive forms. Indians of the eastern woodlands measured power and wealth not through material accumulation but through influence. A powerful clan mother, a respected headman, or a successful war captain got her or his power first from the *gantowisas*, or clan mothers, often convened as a council to make significant decisions. Their relationships with others, sustained through ritualistic gift-giving, ensured their influence. Trade between groups, even between those far from one another, was carried on not only to acquire unique items but to build and sustain alliance relationships. “From the Native perspective there [was] no such thing as smuggling. There’s just trade or not trade.”<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> David *Kayietakeron* Fadden, Member of the Mohawk Nation, Interview by author, Big Bear Café, Akwesasne, Mohawk Reservation, New York, June 22, 2011.

Trade represented mutuality and thus peaceful relations; trade was the opposite of war. Trade equaled stability.<sup>39</sup>

Trade provided essential goods as well as highly sought luxury items. At first, prestige goods included ornately knapped flint objects, amulets of copper, precious stones and metals, rare pigments, and seeds. Complex Native trade networks linked peoples of the North Atlantic coast to those of Central America and beyond. After the arrival of Europeans textiles comprised the bulk of both commonplace and fine goods, followed by brass and copper cookware, tools, jewelry, and alcohol.<sup>40</sup> By the early eighteenth century, Native consumers demanded cloth, blankets, and clothing the most out of all European manufactures. During times of conflict, weapons and ammunition proved more decisive.<sup>41</sup>

Whatever the goods obtained, it was a person's ability to distribute, not to possess, that demonstrated one's generosity and created relationships of power. "Relationship govern[ed] Iroquois society: relationship of inward and outward peace, relationship of family, relationship of clan, relationship of village, and relationship with the world outside the League."<sup>42</sup> Influential clan mothers, shamans, and war captains displayed prestige goods in their dress and accoutrements, but they also gave them away to trusted allies, family, and friends. Most

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<sup>39</sup> Fred Anderson and Andrew R.L. Cayton, *The Dominion of War: Empire and Liberty in North America, 1500-2000* (New York: Viking, 2005), 26; Daniel K. Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Va., 1992, 1994), 28-30; Daniel K. Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), 62-65; Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 99-101.

<sup>40</sup> Daniel Richter, *Before the Revolution: America's Ancient Pasts* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 28-3, 128-131; James W. Bradley, *Before Albany: An Archaeology of Native-Dutch Relations in the Capital Region, 1600-1664* (Albany: New York State Museum, 2007), 8-19.

<sup>41</sup> Richard White, *The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983, 1988), 45-47. In section of this work, White discusses the relationship between the Choctaw and the French in the early decades of the eighteenth century. While geographically and culturally different his description of harvesting resources, trade, and ritualistic gift-giving are apt.

<sup>42</sup> Lynn Delisle and Ross Kakwirakeron Montour, Kahnawake Mohawk, Interview by author, Edge Water Café, Kahnawake, Quebec, Canada, 14 June, 2010.

European goods merely rested briefly with a Native leader before being distributed through kinship networks. Giveaways like this held families, clans, and nations together. Such exchanges carried the power to resolve disputes or tensions between nations, spread spiritual messages, or increased the flow of information.<sup>43</sup>

The exchange of information was indeed as important as the exchange of goods. Traders conveyed messages such as these. Crops were plentiful or scant. Kin had been killed or were thriving. Neighbors offered advantages or proved troublesome. Groups passed such knowledge in common and stressful times. Information exchanged between the Mohawk and St. Lawrence Valley allowed the Haudenosaunee to develop and prosper. Controlling information offered the Mohawk and the Iroquois opportunities, and greater agency, in the face of European encroachment. Controlling information, important during times of stability, became indispensable during times of war.<sup>44</sup>

Natives in northeastern North America understood property and land tenure in very different ways than Europeans. Everything on earth – animate or inanimate – was understood as possessing a life force, or *orenda*, in Haudenosaunee culture. Humans were not on the top of a hierarchy in nature or society, but rather deeply entwined with all other *orenda*. So from the rocks and elm trees to the Hudson River or enemy Algonquian-speaking nations, this notion deeply colored the Iroquois view of the environment and all activity within *kanienke*.<sup>45</sup> This

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<sup>43</sup> Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534-1701*, xxxvi-xxxvii; Francis Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies from its Beginnings to the Lancaster Treaty of 1744*. (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1984), 95-96.

<sup>44</sup> Jean Lunn, "The Illegal Fur Trade Out of New France, 1713-1760," *Report of the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Society* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1939): 61-76, 63.

<sup>45</sup> Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *Creatures of Empire: How Domesticated Animals Transformed Early America* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2004), 19-21; Kathleen J. Bragdon, *Native People of Southern New England, 1500-1650* (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 184-190; Alexandra Van Dongen, et al, *One Man's Trash is Another Man's Treasure: The Metamorphosis of the European Utensil in the New World* (Williamsburg: Jamestown Settlement Museum, 1996), 27-35. *Orenda* translates as life force inherent in all things – similar to

belief also carried with it the power of *kaniénke* itself to dictate Iroquois culture. The Iroquois did, however, see this land as under their supervision and care, using it in ways to sustain their people and ultimately to protect it in the face of European encroachment and coexistence. Native farmers cut down trees to plant crops or build villages. They harvested elms and birches and stripped them of the bark that they could use to build longhouses, construct canoes, and make baskets.<sup>46</sup> The Iroquois were not always in perfect harmony with the land and yet the land regularly reminded them of its – and their – limits.<sup>47</sup>

If trade was an ancient means to mitigate tensions in northeastern North America, the Iroquois League itself was a newer creation. Oral tradition places the origins of Kaienerekowa – the Great League of Peace and Power, symbolized by the tree of peace – well before the year 1000. Other scholars date the foundation of the league between 1142 and 1570. Tradition and history, however, converge on key aspects of the foundation of the Great League of Peace and Power in a reaction to the warfare that had ravaged the eastern woodlands for generations. The Five Nations that formed the League – the Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, and Mohawk peoples – had been deadly enemies, attacking and killing each other with abandon. This changed when a figure named Deganawidah but known then and now as “The Peacemaker,” arrived to share a message with the Five Nations that delivered them from the bondage of violence. The Peacemaker’s message joined the Five Nations together in rituals that would allow them to

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spirit. More research exists on the Algonquian equivalent of *Manitou*. Michael Galban, Washoe Nation, Public Historian, Interview by author, Ganondagan New York State Historic Site, Victor, New York, 29 June, 2011.

<sup>46</sup> Canoes, a uniquely Native American vessel, made travel and communication viable *kaniénke*. Most nations built canoes of pliable birch bark as was the case of some Iroquois canoes. Tribes in the Ohio River drainage, like the Wea, used more prevalent elm bark. Some sources suggest Iroquois used elm bark canoes. These light, strong, and durable craft impressed early European onlookers and made possible travel and trade between the St. Lawrence and the Hudson River. Tappan Adney and Howard Irving Chappelle, *The Bark Canoes and Skin Boats of North America*, For the Museum of History and Technology (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1964), 7-10; Timothy J. Kent, *Birch Bark Canoes of the Fur Trade*, Volume I (Ossineke, MI: Silver Fox Enterprises, 1997), 4-5.

<sup>47</sup> William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), 48-50.

assuage their grief at the loss of loved ones without resorting to war, by means of rituals carried out annually both figuratively and literally beneath the Tree of the Great Peace in Onondaga, the spot where all five nations first joined together.<sup>48</sup>

Both the Deganawidah Epic and the Tree of the Great Peace are linked to wampum belts, sacred objects made of purple beads carved from quahog clam shells and white beads carved from whelk shells, sewn into patterns that could be used to communicate spiritual traditions and record the relations of peoples to each other in trade and diplomacy.<sup>49</sup> The so-called “Hiawatha Belt” shows all five nations from east to west linked together with the tree of peace at the center. The two-row wampum belt, *kaswentha*, shows two groups as equals, this was used to explain relations between member nations as well as the League itself in relation to Europeans later. The language of wampum belts represented the trade and cooperation that united the Five Nations. Members believed that while they remained ritually joined in the League that plenty and prosperity would attend them so long as they remained faithful to the teachings of the Peacemaker.<sup>50</sup>

The Five Nations structured the league as a whole, but clans – groups of related families – dictated local affairs. Haudenosaunee clans were (and are) matrilineal and matrilocal with married couples living with the wife’s extended family. Clan mothers – *gantowisas* – ultimately controlled leadership doling out power to male leaders. “Everything within the clearing belonged to the women. Men trapped, hunted, did diplomacy. Women could do it [conduct diplomacy] if talented [in oratory and negotiation]. There was no rigid definition of what women

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<sup>48</sup> Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 32-38.

<sup>49</sup> Sue Ellen Hearne, Mohawk Nation, Interview by author, Akwesasne Museum, Akwesasne Mohawk Reservation, New York, 22 June 2011. Ms. Hearne, the museum director, shared her knowledge of wampum belts and showed me the original, so-called “wolf belt” an eighteenth-century belt that is still proudly held by the Mohawk people of Akwesasne.

<sup>50</sup> Delisle and Montour Interview. Montour said, “The two row wampum belt, *kaswentha*, portrays the relationship of the Five Nations. The League provides mutual advantage but keeps all members at arm’s length.” Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534-1701*, 24-25.



could or couldn't do."<sup>51</sup> The Great League of Peace and Power dictated Iroquois politics, but clan mothers, acting together, controlled everything from rituals surrounding childbirth to the production of maize to the delegation of authority to male war captains or political headmen.

Many modern Mohawks see the role of *gantowisas* as changing little over the centuries. As two contemporary Mohawk commentators explain, "Iroquois women represent constancy. They are the ones who guard language, culture, and food. The women have their feet on the Earth. [Historically,] they provided sustenance and decided what was to happen."<sup>52</sup> It was an Iroquois woman's power to create life that gave the council of mothers and grandmothers the power to govern and delegate authority to men. Haudenosaunee women were comparatively rarely involved directly in diplomacy during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but women strengthened family ties in ways that frequently involved travel from village to village. These roles were generally available to women, not the clan mothers who were older and comparatively less mobile. Women, but not clan mothers themselves, frequently travelled between villages in the early eighteenth century. According to a modern Mohawk source, "Back in those days, I wouldn't be surprised to see Indian women doing the trade, not just standing behind their husbands, because they [women] had power. They knew it. They were also very mobile."<sup>53</sup>

These women plied the waters between the Mohawk Valley and St. Lawrence renewing kinship ties, transporting goods, and dispersing information. Eventually these same women augmented their tradition of travel to benefit from European demand. Iroquois women honed

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<sup>51</sup> Peter Jemison, Seneca Nation, Interview by author, Ganondagan New York State Historic Site, Victor, New York, June 29, 2011. Peter is the director of Ganondagan New York State Historic Site and a descendent of Iroquois adoptee Mary Jemison.

<sup>52</sup> Delisle and Montour Interview.

<sup>53</sup> Darren Bonaparte, Mohawk Nation, Interview by author, St Regis Mohawk Community, Ontario, Canada, June 22, 2011. Bonaparte is an expert and public speaker on Iroquois culture, especially the importance and significance of wampum belts in the oral tradition of the Six Nations.

their entrepreneurial acumen transporting goods and furs as traders, go-betweens, and porters. They brought profit and prestige to their people, profit to other smugglers, and stress to English and French officials bent on stifling trade.<sup>54</sup>

The Mohawk nation, or Ganiienkeh (“People of the flint”) dominated the Hudson River-Lake George-Lake Champlain-Richelieu River-St. Lawrence River corridor. By virtue of their location and connections with both European traders and the other peoples of the League, they became the most militarily powerful of the Five Nations, capable of exerting influence from the St. Lawrence to the Shenandoah Valley and beyond.<sup>55</sup> European maps denoted the northern end of the corridor as Nouvelle France and the southern portion as New York. In everyday matters of trade, transport, communication, and diplomacy the entire region remained *kanienke*.

European encroachment into *kanienke* in seventeenth century came from three sources: the French with the establishment of New France centered upon the St. Lawrence River in 1608, the Dutch with the founding of New Netherland along the Hudson in 1624, and the English takeover of New Netherland as New York in 1664. As Europeans entered the region they brought with them epidemic diseases, desirable trade goods and technologies, competition, and new ways of looking at things. The nine decades between Samuel de Champlain’s 1609 foray into *kanienke* and the Grand Settlement treaties of 1701 offer essential context for understanding the power of the Mohawk and their place in the trade between Canada and New York in the early eighteenth century.

In 1608, Samuel de Champlain, a Saintonge mariner, cartographer, trader, and political leader, founded Quebec, the first year-round European settlement on the St. Lawrence, in the

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<sup>54</sup> Barbara Alice Mann, *Iroquoian Women: The Gantowisas* (New York: Peter Lang, 2000), 39-45; Barbara J. Sivertsen, *Turtles, Wolves, and Bears: A Mohawk Family History* (Bowie, M.D.: Heritage Books, 1996), 11.

<sup>55</sup> In 1711, the Tuscaroras, pushed out of South Carolina by English encroachment and enticed by kin in Iroquoia, became the sixth nation. To this day the Tuscaroras are viewed as a Native American tribe though most Iroquois do not see them as a full member “sixth” nation.

heart of what would become *La Nouvelle France*. His outpost yielded little of mineral wealth, but he was encouraged that the Algonquian-speaking Montagnais and Hurons who befriended him might convert to Catholicism. He and his men had already taken to trading European manufactures with these peoples for furs. In the summer of 1609 Champlain and two of his men performed what they thought was a kind and benign act. When asked, they paddled with the Montagnais, Hurons, and other Algonquian-speakers the 200 miles into *kanienke* for an attack against an old foe, the Haudenosaunee. Champlain and his men carried arquebuses – large ungainly matchlock muskets – weapons with a power that no Native expected. These firearms gave Champlain and his Indian allies a victory over the heretofore formidable Iroquois. Victory cemented French ties to Algonquian-speakers that would last until 1760. This act of war also incurred Iroquois enmity towards the French that lasted nearly as long. This act signaled the new meanings of how trade, weaponry, and cultural interaction between Europeans and Natives would forever change the eastern woodlands.<sup>56</sup>

Henry Hudson entered the river that now bears his name in 1609, the same year Champlain made his expedition, but it was not until 1624 that enterprising Dutchmen founded the permanent settlement of Ft. Orange in the heart of *kanienke*.<sup>57</sup> The Dutch brought their knowledge of furs and proclivity for beaver-felt hats into the beaver-rich Hudson Valley, by leave of the Iroquois. Dutch entrance into *kanienke* was more a result of the Iroquois seeking a European ally against the French and the lure of Dutch firearms than of the efficacy of Dutch colonization.

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<sup>56</sup>Anderson and Cayton, *Dominion of War*, 18-19.

<sup>57</sup> Dutch Captain Hendrick Christiansen established a seasonal outpost near the location of Albany in 1614 which they named Ft. Nassau. Despite a profitable fur trade with the Mohawks seasonal flooding forced them to abandon the post in 1617. Permanent Dutch settlement arrived in 1624. See Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 88-89.

French, Dutch, and later English clergy attempted to gain converts to Christianity in Canada and *kanienke*. Such proselytizing sometimes found purchase in Native communities but more often Natives who adopted Christianity practiced only parts of it alongside their traditional cosmology. The Dutch Reformed Church made attempts to convert the Iroquois in New Netherland, but found minimal success. French Jesuit priests sought Native converts from the St. Lawrence to the Hudson and further west. The Iroquois resisted nearly all attempts to proselytize them and yet the influence of Christianity on them was gradual and significant. French, Dutch, and English cultures slowly influenced life in *kanienke*.<sup>58</sup>

When trade failed, peaceable connections could not be maintained, and war erupted between groups. Mourning war, very different from European war aims, had functioned in *kanienke* for centuries. In European war a belligerent tried to exterminate or cripple the opponent forcing them to succumb to demands for land, goods, or control. In Europe, by the seventeenth century, growing states formed standing armies at unprecedented sizes equipped with increasingly destructive gunpowder weapons. In North America, mourning war sought very different goals. Mourning war permitted families who had lost loved ones in battle to restore their numerical and spiritual strength by adopting members of enemy peoples. Mourning war revolved around conserving spiritual power and the importance of family, clan, and nation. Mourning war could be violent, particularly in the ritualized torture that one party might inflict on a male captive before ceremonially killing him. The torture and execution of war captives

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<sup>58</sup> Barabara J. Sivertson, *Turtles, Wolves, and Bears: A Mohawk Family History* (Bowie, M.D.: Heritage Books, 1996), 49-53; *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France, 1610-1791; The Original French, Latin, and Italian texts, with English Translations and Notes*, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland: Burrows Bros. Co., 1896-1901), **Paul LeJeune** especially in volumes 7 and 8 and Jacques Marquette in volume 59.

held great meaning and importance in Haudenosaunee culture and were conducted not simply as exercises in cruelty but for ritual purposes.<sup>59</sup>

In the Iroquois context, the aim of mourning war was to spread the spiritual message of the league of peace and power. Along with this message came alliance, trade, and intermarriage. Healthy captives, especially women and children, entered the victorious nation as adoptees. Mourning war defended honor, restored spiritual power, and supported population numbers depleted by attack or, later, decimated by European disease. Iroquois expansion was not halted, but forever changed as Europeans slowly and awkwardly entered *kanienke*.<sup>60</sup>

Culture influenced all dynamic characters in this rich and complicated narrative. Cultural values influenced all participants in this narrative in the way they viewed their surroundings and interacted with others. Culture mattered most when peoples interacted in cooperative or violent ways. All peoples along this riverine highway interacted with others and were changed in the process. The ways in which these changes manifested themselves in cooperation, tolerance, tension, or conflict influenced geography and left behind the historical record that frames our story.

## HISTORY

European power in North America remained weak in the early seventeenth century. New France held only a few hundred French settlers before 1650, and though the number of *habitants* would rise to nearly 10,000 by 1670 and continue to grow thereafter by natural increase, the colony's population would remain small, creating problems that would haunt it throughout the

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<sup>59</sup> Daniel K. Richter, "War and Culture: The Iroquois Experience," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 40 (Oct., 1983), 529-536; Fred W. Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 154-1763* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000), 13-14.

<sup>60</sup> Daniel P. Barr, *Unconquered: The Iroquois League at War in Colonial America* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006), 34-36; Anderson and Cayton, *Dominion of War*, 23-25.

colonial period. New Netherland had somewhat more success in attracting Dutch families and was roughly twice as populous as New France by the mid-1660s, but still scarcely replicated Dutch society and the Dutch land tenure system as its founders intended. English settlements in the Chesapeake and New England supported the largest populations in colonial North America, but success was often tenuous. As various European states struggled to establish viable colonies in the eastern woodlands, competition among them offered the Iroquois opportunity.<sup>61</sup>

Competition with the French moved Dutch traders to ally with the Iroquois. The Iroquois supplied prime furs to their Dutch allies for trade goods, especially matchlock muskets. This exchange strengthened interdependence between the Iroquois and the Dutch. The Dutch grew more involved in Iroquois objectives and the Iroquois came to advance Dutch goals when needed.<sup>62</sup>

Europeans sought beaver and other furs to make, above all, fur felt hats. European traders preferred beaver furs above all else but they highly prized the beaver cloaks that Natives had worn for several winters, which the French called *castor gras*, or “greasy beaver,” because the long outer guard hairs had worn away and the undercoat had become pliable with the wearers’ body oils. European traders, ironically to the Natives, paid a premium for the “greasy beaver,” which had lost much of its warmth, because these furs were more easily processed into the fur felt needed for hat manufacture. These pelts ultimately found their way to European fur auctions, the hands of hatters, and the heads of Europe’s middle and upper classes. At the same

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<sup>61</sup> Peter Moogk, *La Nouvelle France: The Making of French Canada, A Cultural History* (East Lansing, Mich.: Michigan State University Press, 2000), 105-107; Allan Greer, *The People of New France* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 12-17; James Pritchard, *In Search of Empire: The French in the Americas, 1670-1730* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 16-19.

<sup>62</sup> Daniel K. Richter, “Ordeals of the Longhouse: The Five Nations in Early American History,” in *Beyond the Covenant Chain: The Iroquois and Their Neighbors in Indian North America, 1600-1800*, eds., Daniel K. Richter and James H. Merrell (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1987), 20-21; James W. Bradley, *Before Albany: An Archaeology of Native-Dutch Relations in the Capital Region, 1600-1664* (Albany: New York State Museum, 2007), 112-118.

time, Haudenosaunee began growing accustomed to European goods from clay pipes and brass kettles to steel knives and woolens. In the process, Dutch and Iroquois worlds drew much closer together than either society realized.<sup>63</sup>

The Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca peoples eagerly satisfied Dutch fur demand. Iroquois hunters harvested furs in eastern woodlands and warriors soon turned to capturing furs from competing Algonquian-speakers to the north and west. These assaults, excursions, and diplomatic missions are known generally as “The Beaver Wars.” During this period, from the 1640s to the 1650s, mourning war provided the initial framework and motivation for raids intended to replace populations under increasingly severe pressure from epidemic disease. The character of warfare shifted significantly as Iroquois warriors brought home not only captives, but furs and skins that they could exchange for trade goods and, increasingly, for weapons and ammunition. The Haudenosaunee spiritual message of the Tree of Peace often permitted them to gain influence over neighboring peoples by sharing their spiritual message. Dutch firearms also granted the Haudenosaunee even more power over Native peoples throughout New York and beyond including the Miamis, Petuns, Hurons, Neutrals, and Delawares.<sup>64</sup>

The search for beaver stores increasingly led Iroquois parties into the area south of the Great Lakes and north of the Ohio that the French loosely claimed as the *pays d'en haut*, or,

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<sup>63</sup> Daniel P. Barr, *Unconquered: The Iroquois League at War in Colonial America* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2006), 40-42; Van Dongen, et al, *One Man's Trash*, 115-130; Thomas Wien, “Selling Beaver Skins in North America and Europe, 1720-1760: The Uses of Fur-Trade Imperialism,” *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 1 (1990): 307-313.

<sup>64</sup> Richard Aquila, *The Iroquois Restoration: Iroquois Diplomacy on the Colonial Frontier, 1701-1754* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1983), 34-37; Eric Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires: Constructing Colonialism in the Ohio Valley, 1673-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); José Brandão, ‘Your fyre shall burn no more’: *Iroquois Policy toward New France and its Native Allies to 1701* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997); Francis Jennings, *Empire of Fortune: Crowns, Colonies, and Tribes in the Seven Years' War in America* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1988), 26; Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*, 61, 84-86; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 56-61; White, *The Middle Ground*, 99-101; Anderson and Cayton, *Dominion of War*, 40-43.

“upper country.” In many cases, military actions in the Beaver Wars retained the purposes of mourning war to restore honor or replace deceased kin. Iroquois influence grew in this region as Algonquian-speakers’ power and numbers decreased. At the same time Iroquois influence grew among southern nations as far south as the Catawbas of South Carolina. By the 1660s, as a result of their victories in the Beaver Wars Iroquois people controlled trade and communication in a large swath of eastern North America. Decisive acts, however, soon changed the fortunes of the Five Nations.<sup>65</sup>

In 1664 the threat of English force gained the colony of *Nieuw Nederland* for the English, who renamed it New York. This change in European rule disrupted the flow of Dutch firearms to the Iroquois, raising doubts of European aid and limiting Iroquois abilities to harvest or capture stores of furs. The English replacement of the Dutch in the Haudenosaunee alliance brought two unexpected costs. First, the Dutch businessmen and families who refused to leave the area, especially their beloved Beverwyck, or “beaver town,” renamed Albany by the English, had to be assimilated into the English Atlantic World. Secondly, the power and influence of the Haudenosaunee, their dominance of the fur trade, and their pre-existing enmities and alliances, both Native and European, were now linked to their connection with the English.<sup>66</sup>

Ever since Champlain’s unwitting entry into a military alliance with the Montagnais in their 1609 raid against the Haudenosaunee, the Iroquois had been anti-French. They had actively sought Dutch trade goods, especially arms to use against French and Native competitors. In 1664 and 1665 Iroquois parties raided French-allied nations in the Great Lakes and as far north

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<sup>65</sup> In recent years new works have sharpened focus on Iroquois contributions to early American history. See Timothy J. Shannon, *Iroquois Diplomacy on the Early American Frontier* (New York: Viking, 2008); David H. Dye, *War Paths, Peace Paths: An Archaeology of Cooperation and Conflict in Native Eastern North America* (New York: Alta Mira Press, a Division of Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009); and Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534-1701*.

<sup>66</sup> Alan Taylor, *American Colonies: The Settling of North America* (New York: Viking Books, 2001), 247-248, 260.



as Hudson's Bay. This act pleased the Dutch remaining in New York, but it alarmed many of the English, still allied with the French. The French would not suffer such incursions silently.<sup>67</sup>

In 1665, France reorganized the way it managed its North American colonies into a royal empire. Louis XIV moved decisively to end Iroquois forays into New France and the realms of allied Algonquian-speakers.<sup>68</sup> The king appointed Daniel de Rémy de Courcelle as Governor General of New France and Alexander Prouville, Seigneur de Tracy, as viceroy. One thousand troops from the Carignan-Salières Regiment accompanied them on a mission to “totally destroy them [the Five Nations].”<sup>69</sup> This threat alone motivated Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, and Oneida emissaries to sign a peace treaty with the French on December 13, 1665. When the influential Mohawk refused to submit, over five hundred snowshoe-equipped French soldiers marched into the heart of *kanienke* in January 1666 aiming to force the Mohawk into submission. Although the French force was poorly-provisioned, it marched as far as Schenectady before limping back to Montreal, a close call that prompted Mohawk leaders to negotiate a peace with the French at Montreal the following May.<sup>70</sup>

The French, however, still distrusted the Mohawk and so, in October of 1666, De Tracy broke the treaty and led troops into *kanienke* a second time, destroying Mohawk crops and settlements. The Mohawk joined the other League Nations in peace with the French in June 1667, a matter of necessity and profound resentment. The new agreement permitted Jesuit missionaries to enter Iroquois towns and villages, making the English in New York apprehensive

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<sup>67</sup> Anderson and Cayton, *Dominion of War*, 1-2.

<sup>68</sup> Richter, *Before the Revolution*, 259-264.

<sup>69</sup> NYCD, IX: 25; Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*, 130-132; Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 102.

<sup>70</sup> Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534-1701*, 118-119; Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 102-104.

of French encroachment. The Iroquois worried about the growing factionalization within the League, a problem exacerbated by Catholic missions and intermarriage.<sup>71</sup>

The Beaver Wars, now in suspension, had yielded significant consequences for the Iroquois. Beaver populations in New York continued to decline precipitously. Dutch traders had exacerbated this decline until the North American beaver was nearly extinct in the region by 1667. Fewer beaver in *kanienke* prompted the Iroquois to seek furs from further afield through trading and raiding, but the French assaults on the Mohawk and Seneca left the Iroquois thwarted. Soon Iroquois war parties turned their attention to southern nations like the Susquehannocks of the Chesapeake in search of captives to place the population lost to disease and destroyed as a result of the French invasion. Other factors, however, held more immediate implications for the Iroquois.<sup>72</sup>

The Beaver Wars not only brought furs and other resources but large numbers of women and children from enemy nations like the Hurons into Iroquois villages. Such large-scale adoptions had the unexpected outcome of creating a large and growing minority of Christian converts, who had been evangelized by Catholic missionaries and were at least partially conversant with French culture, in Iroquoia. Mohawks who married Huron women and adopted Huron children made their villages demographically viable at the cost of making them culturally fragmented. These changes created new tensions would ultimately test the Haudenosaunee in ways they had never known.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534-1701*, 118-119; Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*, 130-132; Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 102-104; Brandão, 'Your fyre shall burn no more', 112-116; Gilles Havard, *Empire et Métissage: Indiens et Français dans le Pays d'en Haut, 1660-1715* (Paris: Septentrion-Presses universitaires de Paris-Sorbonne, 2003).

<sup>72</sup> Aquila, *The Iroquois Restoration*, 40-41.

<sup>73</sup> NYCD, I: 94-96; Harold A. Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada: An Introduction to Canadian Economic History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930), 35, 42; Thomas Elliot Norton, *The Fur Trade in Colonial New York, 1686-1776* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1974), 11; Corbett, *A Clash of Cultures on the Warpath of Nations*, 54.

The 1667 treaty with the French revealed deep rifts among the Five Nations. Many Seneca already favored the French, even as many Mohawk who had favored the Dutch were disposed to accept the English as allies. Still others saw any involvement with Europeans as a dangerous weakening of the Great League of Peace and Power. At the same time English authorities struggled with a lack of consolidated power in New York and New England. These divisions combined with the Catholic influence Huron wives had brought into Mohawk families and proved too much for the Mohawk. In 1667 several Mohawk clans moved to the St. Lawrence River, in Nouvelle France, closer to Catholic priests, French trade goods, and Huron homelands. The first Mohawk settlement near the French was called *La Prairie de la Magdeleine*, or simply, *La Prairie*.<sup>74</sup>

In 1676 several Mohawk clans moved a short distance up the St. Lawrence to what the French called Sault St. Louis. This was in fact was an old Oneida town site called Kèntaké.<sup>75</sup> The Mohawk named it New Caughnawaga after the lower castle of the Turtle clan, near modern-day Fonda, New York.<sup>76</sup> New Caughnawaga offered calmer waters for loading and unloading of furs and goods, proximity to Montreal, and a more direct position on the Canadian end of the riverine highway. Many accounts have understood this Mohawk move as evidence of French influence over the acculturated Huron women, growing French sway among the Iroquois, and

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<sup>74</sup> Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534-1701*, 128-134; Shannon, *Iroquois Diplomacy on the American Frontier*, 31-37.

<sup>75</sup> In 1716 the Iroquois of New Caughnawaga moved their settlement from Kèntaké to Kanatakwenté site of another old Oneida town, this is the where the settlement remains even today, ultimately dropping the New designation from Caughnawaga (or Kahnawake, the modern spelling).

<sup>76</sup> David Blanchard, *Seven Generations: A History of the Kanienkehaka* (Kahnawake: Kahnawake Survival School, 1980), 163-167; Sivertson, *Turtles, Wolves, and Bears*, 18. In 1716, New Caughnawaga would move further up river where it remains a center of Haudenosaunee culture and commerce.

powerful French encroachment against the English. In truth, this move was much more complex.<sup>77</sup>

It is true that once Mohawk men married Hurons and Algonquian-speaking Natives they absorbed Catholic influence into their families and clans. Matriarchal custom dictated that Mohawk men honor their wives' wishes, even if this meant turning from away from other traditions or even their beloved villages in *kanienke*. But in Iroquois eyes this move was not a matter of dutiful, even unwilling, Mohawk men following the lure of the French along the St. Lawrence. Trade, opportunity, and re-quickenning the Great League in fact were the major motives that spurred the Mohawk move.<sup>78</sup>

La Prairie in 1667, and New Caughnawaga, in 1676 had by no means fully broken from the Iroquois League. They were rather Mohawk satellites on the St. Lawrence, which permitted the resident clan members to build closer ties with the French and other Natives in the North while their kin to the South retained the trust of the English. Rather than simply splintering the Iroquois League, the move to New Caughnawaga extended the reach of the League. It was an essential step in reviving the riverine highway between the Hudson and the St. Lawrence, because Iroquois clans now had population centers at each end of the corridor. Despite the physical separation of their nation's members, the Mohawk had now acquired advantageous positions at both ends of the riverine highway.<sup>79</sup>

By this time Iroquois players were not novices with regard to dealing with Europeans or their societies. The Iroquois men and women who plied the waters between Albany and

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<sup>77</sup> Gerald F. Reid, *Kahnawà:ke: Factionalism, Traditionalism, and Nationalism in a Mohawk Community* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 6-7.

<sup>78</sup> Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*, 176-177; Dye, *War Paths, Peace Paths*, 120-123.

<sup>79</sup> Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 125; Gretchen Lynn Green, "A New People in an Age of War: The Khanawake Iroquois, 1667-1760" (Ph.D. Diss., The College of William and Mary, 1991), 33-35; Reid, *Kahnawà:ke*, 9.

Montreal had been traveling the route for years. Most had relatives at either end of the Mohawk-St. Lawrence corridor. Many Mohawks practiced Catholic or Protestant Christian beliefs, followed their traditional cosmology, or observed a hybrid of both. Most Mohawks spoke an Algonquian dialect or trade jargon along with more than one European language. Iroquois middlemen, traders, and porters were sophisticated business people, similar to the English, Dutch, and French merchants posted at different ports around the Atlantic World. Iroquois leaders were aware that they possessed power and influence within *kanienke* which rippled widely out into the Trans-Atlantic trade routes down the eastern seaboard to the Caribbean and outward, back to European ports and commercial centers.<sup>80</sup>

After the establishment of La Prairie and New Caughnawaga, Mohawk women did what they had always done, and kept their families and clans together. Beginning in the 1670s many Mohawk women travelled both north and south between New Caughnawaga and the Mohawk Valley to visit family and renew kinship ties. Such visits aimed to keep families united and well informed, bringing trade goods and news from home. Meanwhile Mohawk women and men saw the opportunity to transport trade goods between the two regions. What European officials termed smuggling began on Native terms as the mundane consequence of maintaining trade and family ties, and grew, always on Native terms, to become one of the most important aspects of North American imperial politics in the eighteenth century.

The 1670s marked a turning point in colonial history and the Haudenosaunee story. In 1675 English colonists in New England faced Pan-Indian resistance in Metacom's War. After four decades of relative peace and gradual cultural convergence between Wampanoags and Puritans, violence began in Plymouth and soon spread to Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Massachusetts Bay Colony. Metacom, or King Philip, like many New England Natives, had

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<sup>80</sup> Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 247; Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1532-1701*, 153-54.

acculturated to enough of English society as to alarm many colonists. Colonists rejected Native acculturation and ultimately changed their cooperative observance of English common law to increasingly discriminate against Natives.<sup>81</sup>

Metacom brought Pequots, Niantics, Narragansetts, and others together into alliance with the Wamponoags to challenge the English militarily in New England. The resulting war, the most devastating in terms of the proportions of population and property destroyed in American history, killed one in sixteen New England males. Metacom called for the Iroquois to join the fray, but the governor of New York, Edmund Andros, had already induced the Mohawk to side with the English colonists. The Mohawk, understanding an alliance with the English as an opportunity to renew their spiritual power by resuming the Beaver Wars, attacked the Wampanoags and their allies.<sup>82</sup> The Mohawk received goods and greater influence for their aid to the English; the English recognized the benefits of gaining the military support of the Iroquois League, especially the influential and mobile Mohawks. This Mohawk intervention set a precedent for future Iroquois involvement as self-interested participants in English imperialism.<sup>83</sup>

In the fall of 1675 some English colonists in Virginia ignored the treaties of their own colony, encroached on Native lands, and triggered the Susquehannock War, a conflict that began in Native resistance to unjustified English encroachment onto Native lands. By 1676 the violence changed into a class conflict in Bacon's Rebellion in which Governor of Virginia,

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<sup>81</sup> For thorough treatment of Metacom's Rebellion see James Drake, *King Philip's War: Civil War in New England, 1675-1676* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999) and Jenny H. Pulsipher, *Subjects Unto the Same King: Indians, English, and the Contest for Authority in Colonial New England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005).

<sup>82</sup> Anderson, *Creatures of Empire*, 233-237.

<sup>83</sup> Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1532-1701*, 148-151; Anderson, *Creatures of Empire*, 237.

William Berkeley aimed to enforce the colony's carefully brokered peace and quash the efforts of the expansionist settlers under the leadership of the upstart Nathaniel Bacon.<sup>84</sup>

The Susquehannocks were Iroquoian in language and culture but had long resisted subordination to the Iroquois League. Now, as in the case of Metacom's War, the outbreak of violence offered the Iroquois an opportunity to forge a strategic alliance with the English that could be used to expand their influence over a troublesome neighbor. When the Susquehannocks refused a Mohawk offer to relocate their nation to New York where they could have lived under the League's protection, the Mohawks intervened, aiding the Virginians in devastating attacks on the Susquehannocks. Under pressure from all sides, the Susquehannock nation fragmented: some joined kin in Maryland to live under that province's protection; others joined with Delawares and other refugee groups in Pennsylvania to live in a composite Native community, Conestoga Manor, on the lower Susquehanna; most moved north to submit to adoption by the Iroquois. Iroquois influence now stretched as far as the Carolinas, offering access to the English deerskin trade, new nations from which to adopt individuals (and indeed whole communities), and a new partnership with the English based on demonstrated Iroquois power.<sup>85</sup>

Following the Mohawk aid that allowed the English to defeat the Wampanoags and the Susquehannocks, the English governor of New York, Edmund Andros, formalized an alliance with Haudenosaunee leaders through the Covenant Chain Treaty of 1677. The English perceived the Covenant Chain as a full Iroquois alliance thereby transforming Iroquois warriors into a powerful auxiliary force of the English Empire. By tapping into the alliance that the Dutch had

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<sup>84</sup> Anderson, *Creatures of Empire*, 237-238; Wilcomb E. Washburn, *The Governor and the Rebel: A History of Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1957), 21-29; Kathleen M. Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches & Anxious Patriarchs in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 137-140, 159-167.

<sup>85</sup> Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 136-137; Jennings, "'Pennsylvania Indians' and the Iroquois," in *Beyond the Covenant Chain*, 78-79.

long held, the English believed they had asserted sovereignty over the Iroquois. In fact the relationship was vastly more complicated.<sup>86</sup>

From the Iroquois perspective the Covenant Chain incorporated the English into preexisting Iroquois frameworks under the Tree of Peace. The notion of a chain referenced the Haudenosaunee custom of recording history and deeds in wampum belts. The Covenant Chain Treaty of 1677 indeed marked more cooperation between the Iroquois League and the colonial government of New York, but it also represented vastly different meanings to each group and room for creative misunderstanding. The Haudenosaunee still viewed this land as *kanienke* not New York. The Iroquois had suffered from both French and English intervention, but still traded furs to the English and to the Anglo-Dutch families who continued to dominate the Albany trade. In return the English once again supplied the weapons and trade goods that the Iroquois demanded, leading to a second wave of Beaver Wars.<sup>87</sup>

The renewal of the Beaver Wars began in Iroquois raids and assaults on the Wyandots, Ottawas, and other Great Lakes nations which lasted from the 1680s until the dawn of the eighteenth century. Concurrent with managing their distant military campaigns, the Iroquois also battled outbreaks of smallpox and other disease. The Iroquois, spread thin, began to suffer devastating losses in battles with Ojibwe, Potawatomie, and other French-allied and French-armed peoples in the upper Great Lakes basin. They also endured more attacks from the French. This unwelcome turn of fortune worsened after 1689, when the Beaver Wars merged with King William's War – the American phase of the War of the League of Augsburg, the first of more than a century-long series of Anglo-French wars. Native groups allied with French and English

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<sup>86</sup> White, *Middle Ground*, Introduction, x; Richard White uses the term “creative misunderstandings to explain the miscommunication brought on by different cultural worldviews. Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1532-1701*, 148-151; Anderson, *Creatures of Empire*, 237.

<sup>87</sup> Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1532-1701*, 159-157.



colonial governments found themselves deeply enmeshed in imperial projects in which they had little say and limited influence. By the end of the seventeenth century the Iroquois, despite their alliance with the English, were near defeat.<sup>88</sup>

Having gained power spectacularly in the 1640s and 1650s as Dutch allies, the Five Nations suffered catastrophic losses in population and influence as English allies by the 1690s. By the close of the seventeenth century, under pressure from French and French-allied Algonquian warriors and from disease, the Iroquois had lost about 25% of their population. The fur trade offered opportunity but also the danger of growing completely dependent upon European goods and culture. On the verge of disaster the Iroquois found a chance at redemption in the cooling of Anglo-French hostilities at the end of King William's War following the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697. This chance at renewal along the riverine highway between Albany and Montreal was called the Grand Settlement.<sup>89</sup>

The Grand Settlement made possible the prolific and profitable contraband trade which flourished between Albany and Montreal in the early eighteenth century. This "settlement" signifies a set of parallel treaties transacted by Haudenosaunee leaders in 1701, one with the English at Albany in July and one with the French at Montreal in August. The Grand Settlement was a compromise for the French and the English, but it represented great opportunity for the weakened Five Nations.<sup>90</sup>

Governor Lord Bellomont of New York had made many attempts to keep the Iroquois exclusive allies of the English but was infuriated by the cost of ritualistic gifts to secure it. Bellomont failed to sustain full alliance with the Iroquois before his death in the spring of 1701.

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<sup>88</sup> Howard H. Peckham, *The Colonial Wars, 1689-1762* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965); Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*, 205-207.

<sup>89</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 15; Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534-1701*, 250-258.

<sup>90</sup> Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 202-213; Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*, 210-213, Shannon, *Iroquois Diplomacy on the Early American Frontier*, 56-62.

In July 1701 Iroquois clan mothers directed Iroquois headmen to end the full Covenant Chain alliance with the English at the Albany treaty council under New York Lieutenant Governor John Nanfan. The translator for the English was a Dutch clergyman, the Reverend Johannes Lydius, whose efforts to promote Iroquois interests solidified friendship with prominent Turtle Clan Mohawk families and his own, a relationship that would prove durable and of great importance along the riverine highway during the coming half-century.<sup>91</sup>

At the August treaty negotiations in Montreal, Governor Louis-Hector de Callière continued to work, as his predecessors had worked for decades, to sway the Iroquois to side with New France. The Catholic Mohawks of New Caughnawaga, where the community had thrived with the addition of métis members and had been spared the losses from war and disease experienced by the Mohawks in New York, were an important ally in Callière's efforts. The treaty represented an opportunity for the New York Mohawks to re-establish connections with their kin. It was, therefore, at once a means to heal internal divisions, to escape the risk of destruction by French-allied Indians, and to gain greater influence with the French. Yet while Iroquois leaders promised Callière to abandon their exclusive alliance with the English, they did not side entirely with the French any more than they did with the English.<sup>92</sup>

In fact the nearly simultaneous treaties of Montreal and Albany announced Iroquois alliances with *both* the French and the English in return for carefully calculated concessions that in reality cost the League comparatively little. The Treaty of Montreal permitted Iroquois traders and diplomats free movement along the Great Lakes and effectively recognized the permanence

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<sup>91</sup> Alain Beaulieu and Roland Viau, *The Great Peace: Chronicle of a Diplomatic Saga* (Montreal: Éditions Libre Expression, 2001), 104-113; Gilles Havard, *The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701: French-Native Diplomacy in the Seventeenth Century*, trans., Phyllis Aronoff and Howard Scott (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 166-178.

<sup>92</sup> Havard, *The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701*, 166-178; Beaulieu and Viau, *The Great Peace*, 104-113; Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534-1701*, 270-273; Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 15-18.

of Iroquois claims to lands between the French and English colonies. These included not only the New York homelands of the Five Nations but the entire Ohio Valley, which Iroquois warriors had depopulated-and this claimed to have conquered during the Beaver Wars. Native populations that had been adopted or subordinated to the League during the Beaver Wars were recognized as legitimately under Iroquois control. The Jesuit missionaries who had proven so divisive in the Mohawk villages of New York during the last half of the 1660s and much of the 1670s, left, never to return. The Covenant Chain of full alliance between the Iroquois and English was broken but remained susceptible to diplomatic gifts and rituals of renewal.<sup>93</sup>

The Grand Settlement treaties of 1701 established Iroquois neutrality between two contending empires. The Settlement permitted Iroquois traders and diplomats to build influence over many Native nations allied with the French, even as it allowed Iroquois warriors to raid for captives against such English-allied peoples as the Catawbas and the Cherokees. It effectively prevented both the English and the French from exerting direct influence over the Ohio Valley, which remained an Iroquois hunting ground. The Grand Settlement created the circumstances in which the Haudenosaunee could rebuild their power in the spiritual, political, cultural, and physical landscape between the French and the English.<sup>94</sup>

While the League's diplomats at Montreal and Albany had created the circumstances for an Iroquois renaissance, they had not created a monolithic policy to which all of the Five Nations had to adhere. It was important that they did not, because both the French and the English had to be convinced that the League had actually tilted toward them in the treaties they had separately concluded, and that meant that the Iroquois nations with which each empire was in closest contact had to be free to pursue their own local interests. The New York Mohawks thus

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<sup>93</sup> Beaulieu and Viau, *The Great Peace*, 104-113; Reid, *Kahnawà:ke*, 9.

<sup>94</sup> Havard, *The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701*, 179-183

supported the English and the Seneca more or less supported the French between 1701 and 1754. The nations between them maintained more or less neutral stances. Overall, however, clan mothers and headmen would not fully side with either the French or the English for five decades. It is true that some Iroquois living near the English sided with them in the War for Spanish Succession, or Queen Anne's War (1701-1714), and other conflicts. Caughnawaga Mohawks sided with the French in similar fashion, but Iroquois neutrality was real. Iroquois neutrality brought real changes with it.<sup>95</sup>

The Grand Settlement treaties not only established Iroquois neutrality in English and French affairs, but also solidified stronger trading ties and travelling privileges between the Iroquois League over some of the nations they once raided to the West. This included the Potawatomi and Ottawa in the Great Lakes, in the heart of the *pays d'en haut*, or upper country, near the French outposts Ft. de Baude and Ft. Michilimackinac at the confluence of Lake Superior and Lake Michigan. As Queen Anne's War began, therefore, the Iroquois began to feel their way toward the neutrality between French and English military and commercial affairs that would characterize their efforts to play one empire off against the other for the next half-century. The mature policy would delay decisive victory in the imperial contest and give the Haudenosaunee new options and an extended opportunity to recover the stability and population that had been so severely threatened in the 1690s.<sup>96</sup>

Iroquois neutrality offered advantages to both the English and the French because neither side needed to be as concerned with all Iroquois backing their primary colonial rival. It also

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<sup>95</sup> Beaulieu and Viau, *The Great Peace*, 104-113; Havard, *The Great Peace of Montreal of 1701*, 179-183; Shannon, *Iroquois Diplomacy on the Early American Frontier*, 54-66; Richard Aquila, *The Iroquois Restoration: Iroquois Diplomacy on the Colonial Frontier, 1701-1754* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1983), 56-61.

<sup>96</sup> Beaulieu and Viau, *The Great Peace*, 104-113; Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 214-215; Timothy Kent, *Rendezvous at the Straits: Fur Trade and Military Activities at Fort de Baude and Fort Michilimackinac, 1669-1781*, Volume I, (Ossineke, MI: Silver Fox Enterprises, 2004), 180-181.

gave each side the opportunity to trade with the Iroquois, though the English and Anglo-Dutch still held clear advantages on this score. Anglo-French tensions continued, but without the imminent potential of annihilating the League. Trade and trafficking in goods that were of value to the merchants of both empires continued along the Lake Champlain corridor in both times of war and peace, carrying even more significance at times of war, reassuring Mohawk clan members and Iroquois leaders that they were still one people. It also showed them that English and French empires needed them in the region. Under these circumstances Mohawk families transformed their seasonal routines to include new levels of trade between New York and New France.<sup>97</sup>

Just as exchange defined Haudenosaunee and other Native routines for generations, trade dominated early modern European affairs. The definition of trade as legitimate or illegitimate was just beginning to emerge, as a process that, corresponded to the rise of the state. *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines smuggling as conveying goods “clandestinely into (or out of) a country or district, in order to avoid payment of legal duties, or in contravention of some enactment; to bring in, over, etc., in this way,”<sup>98</sup> and defines a smuggler as, “one who makes trade or practice of smuggling.”<sup>99</sup> The word “smuggling” itself was a coinage of the seventeenth century, entering English from the Dutch or Low German verb *smokkelen*, which the English heard as “smuckle.” A English proclamation, August 9, 1661 first mentions “a sort of leud people called Smuckellors, never heard of before the late disordered times, who make it their

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<sup>97</sup> Alfred, *Heeding the Voices of Our Ancestors*, 44-45.

<sup>98</sup> s.v. “smuggle,” *Oxford English Dictionary On-line* <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/182852?rskey=d4JzHD&result=1&isAdvanced=false#eid> [accessed October 3, 2011].

<sup>99</sup> s.v. “smuggler,” *Oxford English Dictionary On-line* <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/182856#eid22105102> [accessed October 3, 2011].

trade to steal and defraud His Majesty of His Customs.”<sup>100</sup> This new European word meant little to those along the riverine highway and held little power to stop trade.

The word smuggling came into existence along with the new power of and competition between European nation states. Laws to prevent smuggling meant to protect the interests of the home nation. The very notion of smuggling, premised as it was on the notion of an inveterate ceaseless competition between nations, was completely at odds with Native notions of trade as the interaction that bound groups together in mutual obligation and cooperative alliance. Similarly, the mercantilist idea that all trade within the empire existed to benefit the metropole had little resonance for colonial merchants whose welfare depended upon their flexibility in responding to local and regional opportunities for profit. Mohawks and colonists alike therefore looked askance at trade restrictions issued from distant metropolises.<sup>101</sup>

Imperial boundaries in the colonial period, like national borders today, mattered little to Native people viewed land in very different ways. As a modern Mohawk argues, “The border has a precedent with the boundary between the old colonies of New France and New York, or the Dutch New Netherlands. And so, since we [the Five Nations] had people living in both areas we always considered it that we were in our lands. The claims of the outside didn’t really mean anything to us.”<sup>102</sup> Haudenosaunee people in the eighteenth or twenty-first century view borders imposed upon them as superficial with little power to stop their mobility. These conflicting notions of trade and restriction raised both tension and opportunity along the porous borderland between New York and New France.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Gail D. MacLeitch, *Imperial Entanglements: Iroquois Change and Persistence on the Frontiers of Empire* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 37-38.

<sup>102</sup> Darren Bonaparte, Mohawk Nation, Interview by author.

<sup>103</sup> James Pritchard, *Anatomy of a Naval Disaster: The 1746 French Naval Expedition to North America* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1995), 190-193; Kenneth J. Banks, *Chasing Empire Across the Sea:*

Beginning in 1701 both the French and English doled out sizeable annual sums in diplomatic gifts to the Iroquois, hoping to please or sway them. Neutrality granted the Iroquois notable advantages in diplomacy and negotiations with English and French parties. Neutrality also yielded considerable advantages for trade, opening the way for illicit trade between Albany and Montreal forbidden by both European powers. This policy allowed the Haudenosaunee freedom to capitalize on the ability to travel and trade along the riverine highway regardless of artificial European imperial boundaries. It permitted them to manage the flow of information as well as the flow of trade goods across the imperial borderlands. This was a combination of enormous consequence for the empires and the Haudenosaunee alike.

## CHAPTER II

### FAMILY TIES: TRADE, REGULATION, AND GENDER

#### INTRODUCTION

The eighteenth century began along the riverine highway with new possibilities and challenges. The so-called Grand Settlement Treaties of 1701 between the Iroquois and the French at Montreal and the Iroquois and the English at Albany ultimately enabled the Iroquois League to recover from the devastating losses of the seventeenth century. The Haudenosaunee had suffered from attacks by French troops and their Indian allies during and after King William's War, and from the epidemic diseases that had struck Iroquoia periodically during the seventeenth century. Anglophile, Francophile, and neutral factions within the Iroquois League continued to interfere with unified action but Haudenosaunee leaders would soon take advantage of the opportunities neutrality might bring.<sup>104</sup>

Neutrality was not uniformly observed by competing Haudenosaunee factions until the late 1710s. Immediate effects of these treaties came not from arrangements agreed upon by the Iroquois and Europeans, but between the Iroquois and other Native nations of the Great Lakes Region. Competing nations like the Ojibwe, Ottawa, and Mesquakie (Fox) agreed to greater Iroquois influence in their region while welcoming French trading posts at both Detroit and Michilimackinac. Iroquois-allied nations like the Wyandot cheered greater Haudenosaunee

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<sup>104</sup> Francis Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies from its Beginnings to the Lancaster Treaty of 1744*. (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1984), 236-248; Daniel K. Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Va., 1992, 1994), 214-215; Jon Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534-1701* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2010), 266-273. These scholars along with others offer the best view of the complex diplomatic and economic resurgence of the Iroquois League in the early eighteenth century. See David L. Preston, *The Texture of Contact: European and Indian Settler Communities on the Frontiers of Iroquoia, 1667-1783* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009) and Gale D. MacLeitch, *Imperial Entanglements: Iroquois Change and Persistence on the Frontiers of Empire* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).



involvement in the west. These agreements reordered the expanse of *kanienke* and reorganized Iroquois families through intermarriage thereby slowly rebuilding Iroquois numbers and reinvigorating Haudenosaunee culture.<sup>105</sup> Appointed spokesmen for the League served diplomatic missions, while Iroquois women and especially clan mothers still delegated such authority. Matrilineal society continued to influence the way the Iroquois interacted with European others along the borderland between New France and New York in the early eighteenth century. In diplomacy, the everyday life of Iroquois towns, and especially in trade Iroquois women, assumed larger roles than ever.<sup>106</sup>

Thus during the first two decades of the eighteenth century the Iroquois gradually drew back from the brink of demographic, economic, and cultural ruin. Intermarriage, especially between the Haudenosaunee and the French and the Haudenosaunee and other Native nations made Iroquois settlements both along the Mohawk and the St. Lawrence diverse and robust communities. Although English, Dutch, and French interlopers lived alongside Haudenosaunee neighbors, and the boundaries of Iroquoia shifted somewhat in response to external pressures, *kanienke* remained Iroquois land.<sup>107</sup>

The Grand Settlement of 1701 set the stage for life along the riverine highway in the first three decades of the eighteenth century. Three major changes influenced this period. First, as French officials aimed to quell contraband trade, especially during Queen Anne's War, 1702-1713, the demand for smuggled goods between Albany and Montreal rose, increasing incentives for smuggling. Second, within this context of illicit profit key traders including the Lydius,

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<sup>105</sup> Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods*, 266-273.

<sup>106</sup> MacLeitch, *Imperial Entanglements*, 13-23. While MacLeitch is largely concerned with the Haudenosaunee people in the late colonial period her early chapters sets a rich context for the ways in the Iroquois League recovered in the space between French and English forces by the 1710s.

<sup>107</sup> Preston, *The Texture of Contact*, 33-43. Preston emphasizes how the Iroquois and Iroquoia were greatly exposed to Europeans by the early eighteenth century. José Brandão, 'Your fyre shall burn no more' *Iroquois Policy toward New France and its Native Allies to 1701* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 127-131.

Desauniers, and Dagneau families, offer grew rich on the trade goods and furs clandestinely trafficked between New York and New France. Finally, during this period many Mohawk women gained prominence as porters, traders, and intermediaries in this trade. Family informed relationships along the riverine highway, the effects of which radiated outward into the Atlantic World.

### SMUGGLING DESPITE REGULATION

As imperial competition between France and Britain intensified, the two empires sought to impose trade regulations on their colonial subjects. As they did, the smuggling they aimed to squelch in fact grew rather than decreased, and the contraband trade along the corridor thrived. Smuggling supplied Natives and Europeans at both ends of the corridor with goods unavailable at the other end, prime Canadian furs for New Yorkers and superior English woolens for French and Native consumers. Smuggling permitted Native porters and traders to exercise their entrepreneurial skill and to remind Europeans of their limitations along the riverine highway without Native aid. Smuggling granted successful smugglers wealth, power, and influence in Native, French, and British worlds. And in times of war this trade dispersed invaluable weapons, supplies, and information vital to Iroquois, French, and British peoples alike.<sup>108</sup>

In 1700, King Louis XIV increased French trade regulations allowing the Governor of New France Louis Hector de Callière, his Intendant, Jean Bochart de Champigny, and other officials to intervene in the illicit fur trade. “Those who are found guilty of fraud shall be sentenced a fine of five hundred *livres* and their fraudulent merchandise confiscate for the

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<sup>108</sup> Richard Pares, *War and Trade in the West Indies, 1739-1763* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936), 59; Thomas M. Truxes, *Defying Empire: Trading with the Enemy in Colonial New York* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 39; Cathy Matson, *Merchants and Empire: Trading in Colonial New York* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 146-148; Jon Parmenter, “The Significance of the ‘Illegal Fur Trade’ to the Eighteenth-Century Iroquois.” In *Aboriginal People and the Fur Trade: Proceedings of the 8th North America Fur Trade Conference, Canajoharie*, 40-47, Louise Johnston ed. (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2001).

common good.”<sup>109</sup> Like other French trade laws, these aimed to ensure that raw materials flowed directly from French colonies into Dieppe, Rouen, and La Rochelle before finding their way to Paris. These restrictions were also meant to guarantee that French manufactures would turn profits in French possessions overseas. British and French commercial laws aimed to stop smuggling, but government officials knew, as did Iroquois leaders, Ottawa war captains, and enterprising colonists, that the demand could overcome weak enforcement. In Nouvelle France enforcement of such regulations was rare, and traffic in illicit goods between Montreal and Albany developed quickly.<sup>110</sup>

For their part, European authorities maintained their observations along the border between New York and New France, but with increasing benign neglect. The British had long regulated trade within the empire. The British parliament had first enacted the Acts of Navigation and Trade in 1660. These aimed to keep raw materials, finished products, and profits rooted to the metropole, not merely following market demands. The acts were bolstered in 1673 and 1696, and reinvigorated once again in the eighteenth century. The Navigation Acts were stronger and more thoroughly policed than their French counterparts. Nonetheless ambitious subjects from the Caribbean to the Hudson circumvented them. Smuggling was both possible and profitable between French, Spanish, Danish, Dutch, and English possessions in the Caribbean and deep in the North American mainland.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Réglement pour la Compagnie du Canada, 15 octobre 1700, Article XV, *Edits et ordonnances royaux, declarations et arrest du Conseil d'Etat du Roi concernant le Canada*, 3 vols., (Quebec: Fréchette, 1854-1856) microfilm, I: 281. Here “fraude” and “fraudulent” mean contraband goods of British or Dutch extraction being sold without duties in New France.

<sup>110</sup> Lettres Patentes du Roi, en forme d’edit, concernant le Commerce etranger aux Isles et Colonies de l’Amérique, *Edits et ordonnances royaux, declarations et arrest du Conseil d'Etat du Roi concernant le Canada* 3 vols., (Quebec: Fréchette, 1854-1856), microfilm, 1:512-520.

<sup>111</sup> Pares, *War and Trade in the West Indies*, 59; Truxes, *Defying Empire*, 39; Matson, *Merchants and Empire*, 146-148.

From European perspectives, the Grand Settlement Treaties of 1701 were ripe with opportunity. Francophile Iroquois emboldened French officials to anticipate a full Franco Iroquois Alliance. English officials lamented the loss of full Iroquois support yet were not entirely sure how or if Iroquois power or influence would recover from French assaults or epidemic disease. In 1702 English and French competition erupted into open war again in the conflict that came to be known as the War of Spanish Succession - or Queen Anne's War, as it was called when it spilled over into North American colonies.

In many ways this conflict represented a flaring of English and French tensions that never fully cooled since the 1697 Treaty of Ryswick concluded King William's War. Iroquois, English, and French negotiators of the Grand Settlement Treaties of 1701 likely viewed Queen Anne's War very differently. The carefully-brokered compromise the French negotiated in 1701 represented years of combat, gifts, and finally, compromise and yielded them considerable influence with the Iroquois. The British had strived to maintain a superior influence among the Five Nations, but to no avail. The Iroquois had struggled to cope with disease and attack in establishing neutrality in 1701. European affairs, namely threat of a Spanish-Austrian alliance, pushed Louis XIV to seek the Spanish throne for his grandson Philippe d'Anjou. This threat pushed Europe back into war and ultimately spilled back into the colonies.<sup>112</sup>

Iroquois Involvement in War of the Spanish Succession tested the neutrality the League had established in the twin 1701 Grand Settlement Treaties. The 1704 raid on Deerfield, Massachusetts, represented the main act in which Iroquois, and Caughnawaga Mohawks in particular, took clear sides in this Anglo-French conflict. Reasoning behind Caughnawaga involvement in this raid varies. Some say that Catholic zeal motivated Caughnawaga warriors to

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<sup>112</sup> Robert Leckie, *"A Few Acres of Snow": The Saga of the French and Indian Wars* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1999), 229-240; John Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story from Early America* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 3-27.

seek retribution on the New England town where they had learned their stolen mission bell had been taken. Other accounts suggest that Francophile Mohawks simply demonstrated their preference for the French and their disdain for the English. Following this 1704 raid, New Englanders were more fearful of French, Abenaki, and Caughnawaga attacks, the French and their allies more boldly entered British territories, and imperial officials were more aware of the centrality of Native power in military and commercial affairs.<sup>113</sup>

Queen Anne's War had two-fold results on the route between Albany and Montreal. The conflict made everyday life, including smuggling, more complicated. People and materials got pulled to either side of the conflict making cooperation between empires increasingly difficult. British and French attempts to suppress smuggling meant that European manufactures became harder to come by for Native peoples and colonists alike; smugglers responded to the new opportunities to profit by smuggling not just woolens and furs but weapons as well. The Iroquois found the situation ideal for recovering their influence with the English and French, rebuilding their populations and accepting ritualistic gifts from both empires.<sup>114</sup>

One of the most notable developments of the period was the 1710 voyage of the so-called "four Indian Kings," from New York to London to visit the court of Queen Anne. Save for Tejonihokarawa, or Hendrick, these three Iroquois and one Mahican were not in fact sachems. They were, however, all Protestants, the Iroquois having been baptized by Dominie Lydius's predecessor, the Reverend Godfridius Dellius. Tejonihokarawa would pass his prominence on to his family who would continue to dominate trade, diplomacy, and war for decades to come. All

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<sup>113</sup> Preston, *The Texture of Contact*, 50; Evan Haefeli and Kevin Sweeney, *Captors and Captives: The 1704 French and Indian Raid on Deerfield* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003); *Deerfield History Museum Homepage* <http://www.1704.deerfield.history.museum/home.do> [accessed November 22, 2011].

<sup>114</sup> Richard Aquila, *The Iroquois Restoration: Iroquois Diplomacy on the Colonial Frontier, 1701-1754* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1983), 85-92; Max Savelle, *The Origins of American Diplomacy: The International History of Angloamerica, 1492-1763* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967), 250-256.

these Indian allies were conveniently available to Colonel Francis Nicholson and the Albany merchant, Peter Schuyler, who intended to show the British court the necessity of Iroquois aid. In the process they bolstered Iroquois power and the need for contraband goods on both ends of the riverine highway.<sup>115</sup>

Upon their return, Governor Robert Hunter used the voyage to rally Iroquois support for the English and encourage attacks on the French. In August, 1710, he stated, “Your brethren who have been in England & have seen ye great Queen & her Court have no doubt informed you how vain and groundless the French Boasting has been all along...”<sup>116</sup> This moment elevated Iroquois standing in English, French, and Native eyes, prompting the giving of more English diplomatic gifts. The move also raised questions for the Iroquois, especially the *gantowisas* whose inclinations determined so much of Iroquois policy. Favor with the Iroquois gave Mohawk traders and porters less scrutiny as they plied the waterways from New Caughnawaga to the Mohawk Valley, satisfying English demand for French fur and French demand for superior English manufactures.

On a global scale, 1713 was the year that the Treaty of Utrecht formally ended the War of Spanish Succession. This document greatly augmented trade, communication, and diplomacy in Albany. Scores of diplomats in Europe helped orchestrate this delicate peace that would endure for nearly three decades. In North America a different organization helped implement peace and regulate trade between British and French America. Albany merchants established the Commission for Indian Affairs in 1696 as a unified body to negotiate with the Iroquois in both

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<sup>115</sup> Eric Hinderaker, “The ‘Four Indian Kings’ and the Imaginative Construction of the First British Empire,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 53 (1996): 487-526; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 227; Eric Hinderaker, *The Two Hendricks: Unraveling a Mohawk Mystery* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 3-9.

<sup>116</sup> Cadwallader Colden, *The Letters and Papers of Cadwallader Colden, Volume IX, Additional Letters and Papers, 1749-1775, and some of Colden’s Writings* (New York: J.J. Little and Ives Company for the New York Historical Society, 1937), New York Governor Robert Hunter’s Speech to the Five Nations at Albany, August 16, 1710, 389.

political and commercial matters. Members of the most prominent Albany residents, including Schuylers, Ten Broecks, and Banckers, filled the committee blurring commercial, political, and military interests. The group's supposed function was to maintain peace with the Iroquois when in fact it mainly secured profit for its members and laid claim, on behalf of Albany, to the authority to negotiate with the Five Nations, a precedent with lasting significance.<sup>117</sup>

During Queen Anne's War and beyond it, the Commission for Indian Affairs continued to worry about Iroquois favor and their involvement in trade and diplomacy. Smuggling that had once been seen as a necessary evil of business or a tolerable annoyance began to cut deeper into the pockets of New York merchants during the war. When this happened, smuggling to New France became a real concern to British officials in New York. As long as key families drew profit from such activities, however, they served provincial interests, Iroquois goals, and private aims.<sup>118</sup>

In 1715 the New York Commissioners on Indian Affairs expressed their anxiety over the possibility of losing influence in Iroquoia to the French. "The Commissioners say of the French if they are suffered to send Embassadors [*sic*] & settle Smiths among them it will be certain Means to destroy that superior Influence which we have so long held over the 5 Nations & that they hope as an assembly are now sitting they will provide sufficient Funds for the support of the Indian Affairs."<sup>119</sup> The expense and delicacy of diplomacy amongst the Iroquois weighed heavily on English minds. The Catholic Mohawk settlement at Caughnawaga perpetually reminded the English of the possibility that more – or all – of the Five Nations might turn to the French. The Mohawks, capitalizing on the anxieties of New York traders, used their business

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<sup>117</sup> Allen W. Trelease, *Indian Affairs in Colonial New York: The Seventeenth Century* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 204-227; Hinderaker, *The Two Hendricks*, 50; MacLeitch, *Imperial Entanglements*, 37; David Armour, *The Merchants of Albany, New York, 1686-1760* (New York: Garland, 1986), 66.

<sup>118</sup> Hinderaker, *The Two Hendricks*, 67-69.

<sup>119</sup> Wraxall, IA, I: 104.

acumen and kinship networks to profit from the competition between French and British empires for the next four decades.<sup>120</sup> In practice this meant that the Governor and Intendant of New France, the Governor of New York, the Albany Indian Commissioners (and later the British Indian Agent), and a variety of other European officials did their best to expand their respective empires' spheres of influence by means of a prolonged courtship of Iroquois favor. The Iroquois used the neutrality they established in 1701 to assert their interests and pursue their policies wherever they could.

One way in which the Mohawks of Caughnawaga did so in 1716 was by moving their village from east of Montreal at the old Oneida village of Kantaké to Kanatakwente, the site of another old Oneida town. This new location, on the southern bank of the St. Lawrence, southwest of the island of Montreal is the same spot where the Kahnawake reservation stands today. Here the Mohawk still enjoyed proximity to the piers of Montreal across the water, but also an exquisite position at the terminus of the portage between the riverine highway and the St. Lawrence (see map 2, page ix). The role of Caughnawaga Mohawks as traders, porters, and cultural intermediaries was formally established at their new home on this trade corridor.<sup>121</sup>

Competition for Iroquois favor and trade dominance thus intensified between the English and French, notwithstanding the illegality of the contraband that passed along the Albany-Montreal corridor. Both sides continued ritualistic gift-giving to the Haudenosaunee and for their part, the Iroquois continued to seek their aims while playing each European power off the other. Caughnawaga Mohawks already had a reputation as porters and business people.

According to one of the most notable contemporary commentators on the trade, Cadwallader

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<sup>120</sup> Alan Taylor, *The Divided Ground: Indians, Settlers, and the Northern Borderland of the American Revolution* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 47-48; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 120; Jan Grabowski, "The Common Ground: Settled Natives and French in Montreal, 1667-1760," (Ph.D. Diss., Université de Montréal, 1993), 65.

<sup>121</sup> Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods: Iroquoia, 1534-1701*, 128-134; Timothy J. Shannon, *Iroquois Diplomacy on the Early American Frontier* (New York: Viking, 2008), 31-37.



Colden, “The French call these Indians the praying Indians they live chiefly by carrying & that if the trade were stopt they could not live.”<sup>122</sup> This account suggests that the Caughnawaga Mohawks were dependent on the French. Colden failed to note what was in fact most important to the Iroquois of New York – that Caughnawaga served as a Mohawk outpost amongst the French – and although he misconstrued the role of the Caughnawagas as porters rather than as the skilled smugglers and autonomous traders they were, he was right to emphasize their dependency: their livelihood depended entirely upon the illicit trade.

A significant change in Anglo-Franco diplomatic and trade relations emerged in the wake of Queen Anne’s War. The British Prime Minister, Robert Walpole and the chief French minister to King Louis XV, André Hercule de Fleury, maintained peaceful relations between the two crowns that lasted from Walpole’s ascent to power in 1721 to the onset of the War of the Austrian Succession in 1742. The effects of their policies of *détente* were most pronounced, diplomatically, in Europe; in North America, two decades of peace promoted the rise of Iroquois influence and a flourishing contraband trade on the borderlands between New France and New York.<sup>123</sup>

Government officials, military officers, and clergy wielded little power to quell trade across the porous border between New York and New France. Even when laws on paper gave them authority, customs and demand on the ground held more sway. As a result, official inattention cloaked the activities of Native and colonial participants in the trade in a kind of semi-official fog of forbearance. Violated regulations seemed an inconvenient but tolerable necessity as long as the colony and empire profited. Walpole and Fleury only encouraged this

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<sup>122</sup> Colden, *Colden Papers*, Memoranda about Canada [Undated Notes in Colden’s handwriting], 264.

<sup>123</sup> Stanley Nider Katz, *Newcastle’s New York: Anglo-American Politics, 1732-1753* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1968), 19; Richard Pares, *Colonial Blockade and Neutral Rights* (Philadelphia, Porcupine Press, 1975), 59-61; Matson, *Merchants and Empire*, 83.

negligence. Few Europeans wanted to acknowledge anything less than harmonious commerce and cooperation between Britain and France in the 1720s and 1730s. Smuggling not only persisted during these decades, it grew to unprecedented levels as a means of circumventing the market inefficiencies of mercantilism.<sup>124</sup>

Iroquois people traveled, traded, and communicated between the Mohawk and St. Lawrence more than ever during this time. Together, inter-colonial negotiations and pre-existing Native trade relationships created opportunity for smugglers. In 1722 the New York Commissioners of Indian Affairs lamented, “The greatest Fortunes have been got & are at this time getting by the Canada Trade which is a proof what supplies we give to the French, which increases & extends their Indian Interest, for which they wisely pay us in the Canada Trade.”<sup>125</sup> The board questioned the status quo and yet seemed unable or unwilling to stop it.

For officials and traders at both ends of the corridor, then, smuggling between New France and New York was both an administrative inconvenience and an economic mainstay. The illegality of the Canada trade weighed heavily on many English and French minds, though during times of peace this was of only mild concern to colonial administrators. For its Native participants, the trade was simply the continuation of traditional patterns of travel, communication, and exchange. Mohawk traders, porters, and go betweens had been only too happy to profit from the trade along with French and British smugglers.

Not all colonial New Yorkers favored smuggling, but those who disapproved were powerless to stop it. One statement about restrictions against contraband trade reveals, “At Albany where they trade with the French at Canada, the Handlers, i.e. Traders, are against it, the

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<sup>124</sup> Parmenter, *The Edge of the Woods*, 264-267. Canajochere [Canojoharie] on the Mohawk near Albany and Caughnawaga on the St. Lawrence just south of Montreal served as the two terminuses to the riverine highway at this time.

<sup>125</sup> Wraxall, *IA*, I: 141. Peter Wraxall was the secretary for the Albany Commissioners of Indian Affairs in the 1750s. His annotation of the commission’s acts in previous decades is a significant chronicle.

Farmers for it.”<sup>126</sup> Despite support to trade restrictions from some farmers, enforcement was never strong, permitting Native influence to grow.

Despite the dependence of British and French merchants, traders, and middlemen upon smuggling between New York and New France, 1720 witnessed a moment of restriction in New York. On November 3, 1720, influential landholder and merchant Robert Livingston joined with Lewis Morris to introduce legislation to the New York provincial assembly “for prohibiting the Selling of Indian Goods to the French.”<sup>127</sup> The curious move came at a prosperous time for Albany fur traders including Livingston. Livingston encouraged the restriction to force innovation and expansion in the Albany trade to reach more tribes in the Great Lakes.

The legislation passed but the Board of Trade and the provincial government of New York lacked the labor and the will to enforce it strictly. Moreover, the change was far from unanimously popular. Even Livingston’s own son, Philip, disagreed with his father. Philip Livingston, like many Albany merchants, believed trade with New France should be open, not as much to please Native allies as to perhaps Albany traders sustained access to Canadian furs which they themselves lacked. Ultimately Robert Livingston lost even more support over his unpopular move. Dynamic entrepreneurs like his son, Philip, however, led New York to ignore restrictions during the 1720s, paving the way for exponential growth of the so-called Canada Trade.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Arthur H. Buffinton, “The Policy of Albany and English Westward Expansion,” *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* VIII (March, 1922), 351; Patricia Bonomi, *A Factious People: Politics and Society in Colonial New York* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 41; NYCD, 5: 81.

<sup>127</sup> Bonomi, *Factious People*, 91; Cadwallader Colden, *Papers relating to an Act of the Assembly of the province of New-York, for encouragement of the Indian trade, &c. and for prohibiting the selling of Indian goods to the French, viz. of Canada: with a map* (New York: William Bradford, 1724), 1 reprinted on University of Pittsburgh University Library System Online Archive <http://www.archive.org/details/papersrelatingto00cold> [accessed September 15, 2011].

<sup>128</sup> Bonomi, *Factious People*, 91.

French and British law influenced Iroquois lives and the Iroquois often directed how laws unfolded in the eastern woodlands. Native custom often dictated diplomatic and trade relations with European powers. The annual gifts secured as a result of the Grand Settlement demonstrated this fact. Refusing Native terms of trade or not honoring them fully still carried major consequences in the early eighteenth century. Colonial officials, observing that Natives punished offenders through penalties or in some loss of honor, often tailored their judgments in cases involving Natives along cultural lines. They relaxed punishments for unintentional property damage or death in squabbles or fights. French colonial courts even permitted fines paid in trade items - resembling ritualistic gift-giving - to supplant hard labor or imprisonment. It was not a perfect system but it demonstrated Native power and the yet tenuous position of European empires in *kanienke*.<sup>129</sup>

Cultural difference and the willingness of colonial authorities to exempt Natives from the rules they applied to colonists made Mohawk porters and intermediaries even more attractive emissaries. Society often identified European smugglers hoping that public shame would help curb their illicit tendencies. Wealth often emboldened the likes of John Henry Lydius or Marie-Anne, Marie-Madeleine, and Marguerite Desauniers to endure the sting of slander. Mohawks rarely saw either social persecution or legal prosecution in New York or New France for their involvement in the trade. Exchange comprised a significant part of Haudenosaunee custom and colonial courts rarely convicted Natives for smuggling. In the rare event of a suit, the Mohawk parties involved could adduce all kinds of legitimate reasons why they crossed from New York to New France, why they possessed so many contraband goods, or why they had visited various colonists. Natives could often make amends for the infraction of French laws by simply giving

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<sup>129</sup> Jan Grabowski, "French Justice & Indians in Montreal, 1670-1760," *Ethnohistory*, 43.3 (1996): 405-429.

ceremonial gifts of wampum or other goods. This demonstrated another advantage neutrality offered the Iroquois.<sup>130</sup>

Likewise, using Indian porters gave French, English, and Anglo-Dutch smugglers and merchants an impeccable alibi in the event they found themselves in court or under investigation for smuggling. European smugglers could and did claim, if caught, that Native customs, not their own greedy impulses, had occasioned their violations of the law. They might even claim having never met Native porters or traders with whom they had dealt for years in order to avoid scrutiny. The system benefited both parties leaving almost no room for prosecution on the rare occasion that a porter or trader was caught. Neither colonial government dared risk prosecuting the people whose enterprises were the lubricant that made British and French empires thrive and kept locals content.<sup>131</sup>

European traders and transporters, while beholden to colonial law and Iroquois custom, often flouted them. Bribes typically kept regular military troops and guards in cities, forts, and settlements on the side of the traders. Likewise, all sorts of methods ensured that porters or traders made a tidy profit. They might take one or two pelts from a bale of forty-five, supplanting the difference by wetting the skins or adding sand in-between. The culture for trade and for personal or community gain undergirded the entire system of trade between Albany and Montreal for Europeans and for the Iroquois who made it possible.

Even with Iroquois neutrality (or more aptly, because of it), competition in trade and in courting Iroquois favor for political and military ends intensified in the early years of the eighteenth century. Even the Board of Trade reported the threat of French traders on the New York frontier in this report issued to King George II and his advisors September 8, 1721.

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 416-418.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 416-421.

...Particular Care, should be taken to put the Forts already built in the best condition they are capable of, and to Build others in such Places where they may best serve to secure and enlarge our Trade and Interest with the Indians, and break the Designs of the French in these Parts, for this purpose it would be of great advantage to Build a Fort in the Country of Seneca Indians near the Lake Ontario which might perhaps be done with their Consent by the means of Presents, and it should the rather be Attempted without loss of time, to prevent the French from succeeding in the same design, which they are now actually endeavouring at.<sup>132</sup>

The Board of Trade appeared remarkably well-informed about trade and its significance along the borderland by 1721. French and British traders and officials would vacillate in their commitments to please the Iroquois, sometimes concluding that the possibility of their allegiance through gift-giving was too costly. More true was that to forfeit the possibility of Iroquois favor, and with it all chance at transporting goods and information between Albany and Montreal, was a cost that neither the French nor the British could afford. Increasingly, *la traite illégale* rose or fell dependent upon the ability of French, Native, English, and métis families to ply their craft despite imperial government intervention.<sup>133</sup>

## FAMILIES

Just as war and inter-imperial competition influenced smuggling along the corridor between Albany and Montreal, so too did family hold the ability to bring groups together in compromise and conflict. Family was of central importance in this tale of transnational smuggling. Marriage unified families in Iroquoia. Marriages often brought powerful clan mothers together through their children. Marriage brought Wolf, Turtle, and Bear Clans together or into conflict. Sometimes members of separate Confederacy nations married thereby

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<sup>132</sup> "State of the Colonies," The Board of Trade, Dated at Whitehall, September 8, 1721, and signed by J. Chetwynd, P. Docminique, M. Bladon, and E. Ashe. Included in Lord Shelburne, William Petty, *American Papers, Volume 1*, 101, Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

<sup>133</sup> Jean Lunn, "The Illegal Fur Trade Out of New France, 1713-1760," *Report of the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Society* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1939), 64.

strengthening the league as a whole. Throughout much of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Iroquois married Delawares, Hurons, Wyandots, Potawatomes, and others to supplant members lost to disease and war, continuing to make the league the most powerful political, military, and economic force in NativeNorth America. Unlike in Europe, matrilineal Iroquois women could divorce their husbands and remarry with little or no social stigma. Clan affiliation and who one's mother was mattered greatly, but the emphasis was on influence and relationships, not material acquisition.

By the early eighteenth century, the French, British, Dutch, and other Europeans had grown obsessed with blood purity. The French government even enacted and revised several versions of blood purity laws that restricted marriage between certain European groups. These laws segregated the population by class and by the mid-eighteenth century these laws would ultimately limit inter-racial or multi-ethnic marriage, what the French called *métissage*. More significantly in European minds, marriage and family dictated what land or materials one could own, acquire, or inherit. Tradition almost completely bound a boy to follow his father's trade. A marriage could bring families together, thereby uniting resources or reputations. Despite key differences, neither form of matrimony was based on romantic love. Each had more to do with economic, political, and social stability than with emotional well-being. The ways in which these two systems of marriage blended or clashed illustrates the surprising path of illicit colonial trade. Families who engaged in this illicit trade resided mainly on either the Albany end or the Montreal end of the riverine highway.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Guillaume Aubert, "'The Blood of France': Race and Purity of Blood in the French Atlantic World," *William & Mary Quarterly* 61.3 (July 2004), 439-441; Saliha Belmessous, "Etre français en Nouvelle-France: Identité française et identité coloniale aux dix-septième et dix-huitième siècles," *French Historical Studies* 27 (Summer 2004): 507-540. For French attitudes on blood purity and bastardy at home and in the colonies see Matthew Gerber, *Bastards : Politics, Family, and Law in Early Modern France* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012) .

No family was more central on the Montreal end of the smuggling corridor than the Desauniers clan. Antoine Trottier *dit* Deruis or Desruisseux was born in Ige,<sup>135</sup> Burgundy, France, in 1640. He emigrated to Nouvelle France in the 1650s. He married Catherine Lefebvre in Trois Rivières, September 2, 1663. Of the couple's twelve children, fully ten made it to adulthood. Antoine Trottier like most adult Frenchmen in New France during the seventeenth century made his living through a combination of the fur trade and agriculture.<sup>136</sup>

The third-born son of Antoine and Catherine, Pierre Trottier-Desauniers, was born in 1673. He focused on business to expand the family's influence. No doubt the most important connection he made was to the prominent merchant family, the Charests, when he married Catherine Charest on October 12, 1699.<sup>137</sup> Trottier-Desauniers financed and exploited almost anything that could turn a profit in New France, engaging in trans-Atlantic shipping, the fur trade, and the construction of both military barracks and civilian dwellings; he owned a shipyard and even dabbled in mining. Central to his success was his talent for cultivating the friendships and social ties that promoted and protected his family's interests. By the late seventeenth century Pierre Trottier-Desauniers had established himself a chief merchant in Montreal amongst the likes of Alexis LeMoyne Monière, Pierre Guy, and Charles de Couagne.<sup>138</sup>

Trottier-Desauniers's success mattered more as his family grew. Eleven months after the successful couple's wedding, on September 2, 1700, Catherine bore their first son, baptized

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<sup>135</sup> This village near Lyon is sometimes referred to as St. Martin d'Ige, or Igé.

<sup>136</sup> Utilizing families to access this history necessitates employing genealogy alongside notarial records and other primary sources. "The House of François Baril," s.v. "Antoine Trottier dit Deruis," *Roots Web*, <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=bullfrog&id=I11178> [accessed November 17, 2011].

<sup>137</sup> The House of François Baril," s.v. "Pierre Trottier-Desauniers," *Roots Web*, <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=bullfrog&id=I11207> [accessed November 17, 2011].

<sup>138</sup> Louise Dechêne, *Habitants and Merchants in Seventeenth-Century Montreal*, trans. Liana Vardi (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 220-222. For Alexis LeMoyne Moniere see Dechêne, 76-79. See also *Habitants et marchands Twenty Years Later: Reading the History of Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century Canada* eds. Syvlie Dépatie, Catherine Desbarats, Danielle Gauvrau, Mario Lalancette, and Thomas Wien (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998).



Antoine-Pierre Trottier-Desauniers but known as Pierre who was to become deeply involved in trade and shipping in New France and abroad. He rose through the ranks of the *grand marchands* of Quebec, a group so powerful and cautious that they had organized into an entity to protect their common interests. These merchants ultimately appointed Pierre *fils*<sup>139</sup> to represent them as their syndic. Historians have treated the Desauniers family as pillars of Montreal rather than emphasizing their involvement in illicit trade, but it seems clear that a substantial part of the family's wealth derived from smuggling. Their entrée into that profitable activity apparently depended upon young Pierre's three sisters.<sup>140</sup>

Following the birth of Pierre Trottier-Desauniers *fils* the family also welcomed three daughters to their prominent Montreal home. As larger events of trans-Atlantic diplomacy and inter-imperial trade unfolded the Trottier-Desauniers welcomed Marie-Madeleine on December 13, 1701; Marguerite on September 23, 1704; and Marie-Anne on January January 13, 1709.<sup>141</sup> As in most affluent western European families daughters often represented more liabilities than blessings. Daughters would not be apprenticed to a trade or bring in outside income to the family. Tutoring and the proper etiquette would ensure that daughters could bring honor to a family name but perhaps little more. Daughters would ultimately require a dowry for marriage. And yet these three women were exceptional.

The *demoiselles* Desauniers,<sup>142</sup> as members of one of the most privileged households in Montreal, understood the working of trans-Atlantic shipping and the fur trade in ways unfamiliar to most other young women of their community, indeed in ways that were perhaps unthinkable

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<sup>139</sup> *Fils* is French for son and the common moniker for junior.

<sup>140</sup> DCBO, José Igartua, s.v. "Desauniers, Pierre Trottier," (Toronto, Paris: University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2000), <http://www.biographi.ca> (accessed January 22, 2008).

<sup>141</sup> The House of François Baril," s.v. "Pierre Trottier-Desauniers," *Roots Web*, <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=bullfrog&id=I11207> [accessed November 17, 2011].

<sup>142</sup> Contemporaries often referred to these three sisters as the "Desauniers Girls." Eventually this or "The Misses Desauniers," would bring with it direct descriptions of illicit trade between the Mohawk and the St. Lawrence.

for their counterparts in British North America. Though their early years are obscure, commercial connections through their father and brother made these sisters forces to be reckoned with in the smuggling between Albany and Montreal only decades later. Their father and brother eventually set up the sisters with their own trading post among the Caughnawaga Mohawks and kept their paths nearly free of government oversight. These three sisters themselves attained remarkable wealth and autonomy, for a long time thwarting British and French attempts at containing smuggling. Their success in those endeavors, in a roundabout but revealing way, would come to depend on a New Yorker – a remarkable man the same age as Marguerite – and the woman who became his wife.<sup>143</sup>

That enterprising New Yorker, known best today by the Anglicized version of his name, was John Henry Lydius. His father, the Reverend Johannes Lydius, a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, arrived as the minister of Albany in 1700 to replace the well-established Dominie Godfridius Dellius who was called away that year to lead a congregation in Antwerp. The Dutch Reformed church chose Johannes Lydius to supplant Dellius, but Albany businessman William Bancker supplied his own choice, a hastily-ordained Westphalia tailor named Bernadus Freeman. Freeman and Lydius both arrived at Albany in July of 1700. Freeman ultimately took the pulpit at nearby Schenectady, while Lydius replaced Dellius at Albany to the delight of key Iroquois leaders. Dominie<sup>144</sup> Lydius built closer relations between the Anglo-Dutch at Albany and key Iroquois families in the Mohawk Valley while Freeman attempted to undermine him. Nonetheless, Lydius had enough Mohawk support, especially

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<sup>143</sup> The House of François Baril,” s.v. “Pierre Trottier-Desauniers,” *Roots Web*, <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=bullfrog&id=I11207> [accessed November 17, 2011]; DCBO, José Igartua, s.v. “Desauniers, Pierre Trottier,” (Toronto, Paris: University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2000), <http://www.biographi.ca> (accessed January 22, 2008).

<sup>144</sup> Dutch Reformed Ministers and clergy of the Church of Scotland often used this title, derived from the Latin for “Master.”

within the Turtle Clan, that he was selected as translator in the 1701 Albany Grand Settlement Treaty.<sup>145</sup>

Johannes Lydius left evidence of the sensitivity to social proprieties that stood him in such good stead on both sides of the cultural divide in these verses, which he wrote for the birthday of his friend, the Mayor of Albany, Johannes Abeel, in March, 1704:

*Live long, my lord and friend;/ your birthday is today,  
The joyful time of year!/ May heaven grant, I pray,  
Old Nestor's goodly years/ to crown your life and bless;  
Your know how to unite/ grave worth and joyousness,  
Your face has smiles for us;/ your inner worth, in truth,  
Commands respect and quells/ the silliness of youth.  
Wisdom and grace shine forth,/ and anyone on seeing  
Knows upright piety/ is your essential being.  
God keep us together;/ you are my truest friend;  
God bind us as one hand;/ I'll hold to till the end.*<sup>146</sup>

Thus did faith, politics, and social ambition mingle in colonial Albany, demonstrating the determination of an obscure pastor to promote his family's standing. He had reason to do so, for the family was growing. It was not long thereafter that he and his wife, Isabella, celebrated another birth in the baptism of their son Johannes Hendricus on July 9, 1704. He was the first Lydius born in America, and he symbolized the family's slow but steady progress establishing the church in Albany and Protestant Christianity among neighboring Mohawks. As his father's connections in the town and throughout kanienke prospered, Johannes Hendricus's future began

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<sup>145</sup> Barbara J. Sivertson, *Turtles, Wolves, and Bears: A Mohawk Family History* (Bowie, M.D.: Heritage Books, 1996), 49-53; Hinderaker, *The Two Hendricks*, 40-45.

<sup>146</sup> CAP, Johannes Lydius, "Anniversary Ode," cited in Kenneth Scott, "Johannes Lydius's Birthday Ode to Johannes Abeel," *De Halve Maen*, 38:3 (October, 1963): 9-13; reprinted in <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/bios/a/jabeel124.html#anniversary> [accessed March 8, 2011]. The forward slashes [/] indicate the original stanza breaks from the original Dutch.

to take shape. His would be an extraordinary life lived between and within British, French, Algonquian-speaking, and Iroquois worlds.<sup>147</sup>

Young Johannes Hendricus Lydius grew up in a position of influence among Albanyans. When his parents arrived at Albany, they had brought enough brick to construct their own home. This landmark drew the attention of most passersby as perhaps the first brick home in Albany. The family of the merchant Barent Sanders also grew on Pearl Street. Sanders married Maria Wendell of the prominent merchant family on September 19, 1704. The influential fur trade couple had Dominie Lydius baptize their son Robert on July 15, 1705 and younger son Johannes [John] on July 12, 1714. In time, ties formed on Pearl Street between the Sanders family and the Lydius clan grew to great significance in the contraband trade between Albany and Montreal.<sup>148</sup>

Iroquois families, especially Mohawks of the Turtle and Bear clans, gained economic success and transnational influence through trade, smuggling, diplomacy, and military action. Diplomacy and trade between Europeans and the Iroquois did not cease during Queen Anne's War, but rather grew in importance as the Iroquois became increasingly skilled practitioners of the neutrality policy they had inaugurated in 1701. The Iroquois as a whole maintained their neutrality throughout Queen Anne's War but groups of Francophile and Anglophile Iroquois

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<sup>147</sup> Sivertsen, *Turtles, Wolves, and Bears*, 49-53; CAP, Stefan Bielinski, s.v. "Lydius, Johannes," <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/bios/l/jlydius4614.html> [accessed March 8, 2011].

<sup>148</sup> Elizabeth Covart, "Collision on the Hudson: Identity, Migration, and The Improvement of Albany, New York, 1750-1830," (Ph.D. Diss., University of California at Davis, 2011); Kenneth Scott, "Johannes Lydius's Birthday Ode to Johannes Abeel," *De Halve Maen*, 38:3 (October, 1963): 9-13; "Descendents of Philippe de Trieux," <http://homepages.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~truax/assoc/dutri5gen-p/p8.htm> [accessed December 6, 2011]; s.v. "Elm Street Corner," CAP, Stefan Bielinski, <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/loc/elmtreecorner.html> [accessed July 22, 2011]; s.v. "Barent Sanders," CAP, Stefan Bielinski, <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/bios/s/bsanders1368.html> [accessed December 6, 2011]; *Hudson-Mohawk Geneological and Family Memoirs: Sanders* <http://www.schenectadyhistory.org/families/hmgfm/sanders-2.html> [accessed December 6, 2011].

aide their allies during the conflict. Cultivating influence on both sides of the imperial divide required carefully-orchestrated acts of friendship.<sup>149</sup>

In 1710, the same year that Iroquois leaders traveled to the court of Queen Anne, tragedy struck the Lydius family when the Reverend Lydius died unexpectedly, leaving a young widow and a six-year-old son. Isabella and the children remained in Albany where on January 3, 1711 she remarried, the recently-widowed Jacob Staats, a deacon of the church, surgeon, and Hudson-River-sloop owner. Whatever other fatherly influence Staats had on the young Johannes Hendricus, he offered access to shipping connections on the Hudson that would ultimately lead the young Lydius into the fur trade.<sup>150</sup>

Thanks to his father's ties to the Mohawks, Johannes Hendricus Lydius enjoyed intimate access to Iroquois culture, language, and trade at a young age. The Turtle clan adopted Johannes Hendricus out of respect for Dominie Lydius following the Reverend's 1710 demise. Such ritualistic adoption, common in Native circles, created fictive kinship ties that strengthened Haudenosaunee culture and, in this instance, indelibly marked Lydius. This adoption gave young Lydius, a child of Dutch parents in a British world, Haudenosaunee kinship ties that he would use, and abuse, throughout his life.<sup>151</sup>

Johannes Hendricus entered the fur trade quite early, while still in his teens. When he did, he entered a field dominated by some of the most powerful families in *kanienke*, New York, and New France. Iroquois families like that of Chief Hendrick maintained position as traders and transporters; in Albany the Sanders, Depeyster, Livingston, and DeLancey families held tightly to the influence they had built since the 1660s; in Montreal, the Guy, Couc, Monière,

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<sup>149</sup> Hinderaker, *The Two Hendricks*, 84-108.

<sup>150</sup> DCBO, Vol. IV, Peter Moogk, s.v. "Lydius, John Hendricks," <http://www.biographi.ca> (accessed January 22, 2008); CAP, Stefan Bielinski, s.v. "Lydius, John Henry," <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/bios/l/jhlydius4615.html> [accessed March 8, 2011].

<sup>151</sup> Sivertsen, *Turtles, Wolves, and Bears*, 53-56.

Couagne, and Desauniers families exercised considerable control over commerce, politics, and most aspects of society in the heart of New France.<sup>152</sup>

In time, the Lydius and Desauniers families would converge, but Johannes and the three *demoiselles* initially entered the fur trade at opposite ends of the Hudson River corridor. Fur suppliers like the Desauniers needed Albany merchants like the DeLancey or Sanders family to gain access to English manufactures. Likewise, the New Yorkers needed a steady influx of skins from the St. Lawrence or the Great Lakes to make up for the near extinction of New York's beaver stock. At different times over ensuing decades, Lydius and the Desauniers would be either fierce competitors and or surprising allies. By the 1710s their stories grew intertwined along the riverine highway.

The Treaty of Utrecht formally concluded the War of the Spanish Succession in 1713. The year 1713 also marked an important moment for another key Canadian family in this tale of illicit borderland trade. The Dagneau family had engaged in the fur trade in New France since the seventeenth century. In Montreal on June 16, 1713, Charlotte-Catherine Dagneau d'Ouille, more commonly known as Catherine Dagneau, married French-born Montreal merchant Sieur Louis Maray de la Chauvignerie. This was the first marriage for this for the twenty-four-year-old *Canadienne* but the second for her forty-six-year-old spouse. Chauvignerie had come to New France as a French officer in the *troupes de La Marine* before entering the fur trade becoming a successful trader and renowned translator of Iroquois dialects by the time he married Catherine Dagneau. This marriage placed young Catherine Dagneau in the heart of Montreal's commercial and social elite, including the powerful Desauniers family. This marked the beginning of intersections between the Desauniers and Dagneau families. In time Catherine

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<sup>152</sup> DCBO, Vol. IV, Peter Moogk, s.v. "Lydius, John Hendricks," <http://www.biographi.ca> [accessed January 22, 2008]; CAP, Stefan Bielinski, s.v. "Lydius, John Henry," Sivertsen, *Turtles, Wolves, and Bears*, 53-56.

Dagneau exploited her fur trade connections, eventually becoming a significant trader and translator in her own right.<sup>153</sup>

The 1720s saw important changes in the contraband trade between New York and New France. Caughnawaga, Micmacs, and French *habitants* had long favored English stroud – woolen broadcloth – over French woolens. Stroud was cheaper and higher in quality than *ecarlatine*, the French equivalent, and the riverine highway made English goods easily obtainable in New France. In 1722 something made these goods even more desirable in Nouvelle France. The southern French city of Montpellier produced most *ecarlatine* but in 1722 it could not meet Canadian demands for quantity nor quality. To make matters worse, in 1722 bubonic plague swept Montpellier, almost completely stopping the supply of French woolens. These factors combined to swell the contraband trade and the women and men who transacted it during the 1720s.<sup>154</sup>

It is unclear how Lydius entered the fur trade. The business still dominated Albany commerce in the 1710s despite dwindling numbers of beaver in the Hudson Valley and Lydius's kinship ties to the Mohawk made the choice apt. Little is known, however, about Lydius's teenage years. It would not have been possible for J.H. Lydius to enter the fur trade with the support of one of the influential Albany fur trade families. It is unknown which family granted Lydius patronage but in later years he aligned with the DeLancey family and already enjoyed the support of Barent Sanders. A young Anglo-Dutchman working for an English trading family

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<sup>153</sup> *Genealogie Quebec*, [Hereto after referred to as GQ], s.v. "Sieur Louis Maray de la Chauvignerie" <http://genealogiequebec.info/en/testphp/prodmode.php?no=64698> [accessed March 15, 2011] ; GQ, s.v. "Charlotte-Catherine Dagneau d'Ouville ;" Yves Drolet, *Tables Généalogiques de la Noblesse Québécoise du XVII<sup>e</sup> au XIX<sup>e</sup> Siècle*. (Montreal : Yves Drolet, 2009), Tables, 51, 126, 143.

<sup>154</sup> Jean Lunn, *Développement Économique de la Nouvelle France, 1713-1760* (Montreal: Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1986), 104-105.

with linguistic skills – speaking at least Mohawk, Algonquin dialects, Dutch, English, and French by this time – proved an invaluable asset even for an established fur trade family.<sup>155</sup>

The details are unclear but by the fall of 1725 Lydius appeared on the streets of Montreal at the opposite end of the trade corridor he already knew. Apparently Lydius had come to Montreal as an agent of an Albany merchant, likely either Stephen DeLancey or Barnet Sanders. He arrived with a sizeable sum of capital; soon Lydius donned the name Jean-Henri and reversed roles. He now supplied furs to the New York merchant who supplied him rather than trading woolens to French and Native consumers. In a matter of months Lydius started his own fur trading business in Montreal and soon profited enough to attract the gazes of Albany merchants and powerful Montreal competitors.<sup>156</sup>

Powerful Albany merchants enjoyed the option to trade with whomever they chose at even high rates for their ability to continue the ruse of being fur brokers in a region without beaver depended upon it. Barent Sanders along with other allies offered Lydius sustained ties with the southern terminus of the trade corridor. Moreover, Sanders did not sever ties with other Montreal clients including the Desauniers. In time Sanders's sons would expand the family's fur trade enterprises, John in Schenectady and Robert in Albany. The Sanders brothers continued to trade with essential merchant families in Montreal, including the Desauniers and Lydius. Relationships that Lydius fostered from Albany only matured upon the streets of Montreal where he was able to thrive as a *petit-marchand* within months of his arrival. Such a young businessman with a long-dead father and seemingly no powerful patron was unlikely to prosper in already entrenched merchant community of Montreal. And yet, just as Lydius had astounded

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<sup>155</sup> CAP, Stefan Bielinski, s.v. "Lydius, John Henry," <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/bios/l/jhlydius4615.html> [accessed March 8, 2011].

<sup>156</sup> DCBO, Vol. IV, Peter Moogk, s.v. "Lydius, John Hendricks."



and then frustrated New York fur trade families, he soon frustrated the most powerful fur trade families of New France including the influential Desauniers.<sup>157</sup>

The very summer that Jean-Henri Lydius arrived in Montreal, tragedy – or opportunity – struck the home of Catherine Dagneau when her husband, Sieur Louis Maray de la Chauvignerie, was killed at sea on August 27, 1725. Madame Dagneau, henceforth known as *veuve la Chauvignerie*,<sup>158</sup> inherited both her husband's lucrative fur trade enterprise and his brisk translation business. Since she had learned one or more Iroquois dialects, she was able to carry on Chauvignerie's trading connections with the Mohawk and other Haudenosaunee in her own right serving as a translator for Mohawks who brought contraband British goods for sale to her, or used her home and warehouse as staging points before moving their goods to other buyers.<sup>159</sup> The *veuve la Chauvignerie* expanded her husband's business due to her own entrepreneurial skills and deep ties to powerful Montreal merchant families.<sup>160</sup>

Unlike Jean-Henri Lydius, Catherine Dagneau was no outsider to Montreal. She was born near Montreal at Sorel in 1689 and after marrying Sieur La Chauvignerie in 1713 she entered a tight network of prominent Montreal denizens including the Desauniers sisters with whom she had developed personal and trading ties by the late 1720s. These connections grew as a result of Mme. Dagneau's inheritance of her trading house in 1725, and of the 1726 entry of the

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<sup>157</sup> CAP, Stefan Bielinski, s.v. "Barent Sanders," <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/bios/s/bsanders1368.html> [accessed December 6, 2011].

<sup>158</sup> Widow La Chauvignerie.

<sup>159</sup> GQ, s.v. "Sieur Louis Maray de la Chauvignerie"

<http://genealogiequebec.info/en/testphp/prodmode.php?no=64698> [accessed March 15, 2011] ; Ibid., s.v. "Charlotte-Catherine Dagneau d'Ouville ;" Drolet, Tables, 51, 126, 143; Abbé Cyprien Tanguay. *A Travers les Registres* (Montreal, 1886), 139; Tanguay, *Dictionnaire Généalogique des Familles Canadiennes* (1871-1890) (Éditions Élysée, 1975), Vol. I, 325,408.

<sup>160</sup> LAC, Catherine Dagneau, *veuve la Chauvignerie*, Journal, 1729-1730, Microfilm, C13A, vol.11, fol.287-304, 16 novembre 1729 au 29 septembre 1730.

demoiselles Desauniers into *la traite illégale*.<sup>161</sup> In 1726 their father Pierre Trottier-Desauniers and their brother Pierre *fils* obtained the rights for them to open a trading post at the newly relocated Mohawk village Caughnawaga.<sup>162</sup> This act gave the Desauniers family deeper influence in the trade than ever before producing closer ties to the Haudenosaunee and to the Jesuit missionaries to whom the spiritual welfare of the Catholic Mohawks had been entrusted. Even more important was how this move into business for Marie-Anne, Marie-Madeleine, and Marguerite Desauniers was all done while they were single French women. Powerful family connections in trade and government in New France made this move possible and the sisters dominated smuggling near Montreal for the next two decades.<sup>163</sup>

Ostensibly the trading post was a benign, even benevolent venture, for the Desauniers *père et fils* had appointed Marie-Anne, Marie-Madeleine, and Marguerite to aid the Jesuit fathers of Sault-Saint-Louis in instructing the Caughnawaga converts in Christianity and distributing annual gifts among them to help sustain the fur trade. In reality their Caughnawaga trading house created a local monopoly for the Desauniers family, who held government contracts for distributing treaty goods and whose representatives, the *demoiselles*, facilitated the shipment of furs to Albany where they were exchanged for English trade goods. The Jesuits, whose mission became as much a trade hub as a base for spiritual outreach, cooperated fully in these endeavors

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<sup>161</sup> LAC, Dagneau, *Journal*, 16 novembre 1729 au 29 septembre 1730; Tanguay, *A Travers les Registres*, 139; Tanguay, *Dictionnaire Généalogique des Familles Canadiennes*, Vol. I, 325,408.

<sup>162</sup> NYHS, Robert Sanders, Porteur from Madame Demeurseaux, 10, September, 1753 and Porter from Madame LDM, 11, September 1753, *Robert Sanders Letterbook*, Albany, 1752-58, [Microfilm and original].

<sup>163</sup> DCBO, José Igartua, s.v. "Desauniers, Pierre Trottier;" Jean Lunn, "The Illegal Fur Trade Out of New France, 1713-1760," *Report of the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Society* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1939): 61-76; E.P. Hamilton, "Unrest at Caughnawaga, or, the Lady Fur Traders of Sault St. Louis," *Fort Ticonderoga Museum Bulletin* 11.3 (1963): 155-60; Lunn, *Développement Économique de la Nouvelle France, 1713-1760*, 233.

while never openly acknowledging their involvement. The result was an impressive increase in the wealth and influence of the Desautiers family.<sup>164</sup>

Temporarily, at least, there seems to have been no change in the cooperative relationship that had grown between Lydius and the Desautiers family. On February 13, 1727, however, Lydius married Geneviève Massé, the daughter of prominent Montreal *petit marchand*, Michel Massé. This marriage bespoke Lydius's continuing integration into the cultural as well as the commercial world of New France; to marry he had first to convert to Catholicism. Most of all, however, Lydius's marriage extended his reach, independently of the Desautiers, deep into the interior, for Geneviève Massé had a Native mother.<sup>165</sup> Marrying a métis woman, while a liability in French society, was a boon in Native communities like Caughnawaga, for it gave Lydius cultural ties to people with whom he traded and ensured Massé's Native kin of a steady supply of European manufactures as was true in many *marriages à la façon du pays*.<sup>166</sup> In this case Lydius and his bride were married not in a Native ceremony but by a priest in Montreal, though it is unclear in which church. What was clear, however, was that Lydius had chosen his bride with great care.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Camille De Rochemonteix, *Les Jésuites et la au XVIIIème Siècle après des documents inédits* (Paris: Alphonse Picard et fils, éditeurs, 1906), 29-49; Lunn, *Développement économique de la Nouvelle-France, 1713-1760*, 233; Lunn, "The Illegal Fur Trade Out of New France, 1713-1760," 71-72.

<sup>165</sup> NYCD, Messrs. De Beauharnois and Hocquart to Count de Maurepas, Quebec, 15 October, 1730, IX: 1020. "This foreigner married a Metive (Métis), by whom he has two children."

<sup>166</sup> *Marriages à la façon du pays* - "marriages in the style of the country," referred to a series of ceremonies that wed French and later British Canadian men to Native women. Such arrangements continue well into the Canadian fur trade era of the nineteenth century. Jennifer Brown, *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980); Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870* (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980); Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and Frenchmen: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001).

<sup>167</sup> LAC, Certificat du curé Du Lescoat attestant que Lydius n'a donné aucune marque de catholicité, 25 July 1730, Series C11A, Correspondance générale: Canada, reproduced from microfilm of original, call number MG1-C11A, reel no. F-52, Microfilm of the transcript, reel no. C-2389, Original text: Volume 52, fol. 27, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca> (accessed March 26, 2008); DCBO, Vol. IV, Peter Moogk, s.v. "Lydius, John Hendricks," (Toronto, Paris: University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2000), <http://www.biographi.ca> (accessed January 22, 2008); Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 21.

Geneviève Massé, like Lydius, was a relative newcomer to Montreal in the 1720s. She had been born in 1705 at Michilimackinac far to the west, where her father had been engaged as a blacksmith, and involved as well in itinerant fur trading. Her mother Marguerite was métis and an Algonquian-speaker, though it is unclear to which nation she belonged.<sup>168</sup> After her mother's premature death, Geneviève followed her father to Detroit where he continued to pursue his dual career as blacksmith and trader. The post of blacksmith made him privy to Native attitudes and demands as blacksmiths repaired weapons and other trade items, and represented European intentions to stay in a region. Michel Massé apparently prospered at Detroit; when he and his daughter moved to Montreal in 1710 Massé he could afford to abandon blacksmithing for trade only, and to educate his daughters, who (unlike many women in New France) were literate. Their marriage brought together Jean-Henri's links to Albany and the Mohawk Turtle Clan with her ties to Montreal, Michilimackinac, and elsewhere in the interior. These concentrated connections made Lydius a formidable trading adversary for even the most established Montreal merchant families.<sup>169</sup>

This marriage was significant for another reason. Not only was Michel Massé a trader with business ties to Montreal merchants and therefore with access to vital credit, but his métis wife Marguerite had been a member of the Couc/Montour clan; a family with unsurpassed ties to French, Algonquian, and Iroquois circles throughout the *pays d'en haut*. Indeed Geneviève's aunt was Isabelle Montour, famous from Michilimackinac to the Pennsylvania frontier as

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<sup>168</sup> It seems likely that at Michilimackinac she would be descended of local Algonquian-speakers like the Potawatomi, Ottawa, Menominee, or others.

<sup>169</sup> PISTARD, *Procès contre Jean-Henri Lydius, flamand, époux de Geneviève Massé, pour trafic de marchandises étrangères*, juillet 1727 - 28 juillet 1728, BANQ, Cote: TL4,S1,D337428, Centre: Montréal, [http://pistard.banq.qc.ca/unite\\_chercheurs/recherche\\_simple](http://pistard.banq.qc.ca/unite_chercheurs/recherche_simple) [accessed March 14, 2008] ; LAC, *Certificat du curé Du Lescoat attestant que Lydius n'a donné aucune marque de catholicité*, 25 July 1730, Series C11A, Correspondance générale: Canada, reproduced from microfilm of original, call number MG1-C11A, reel no. F-52, Microfilm of the transcript, reel no. C-2389, Original text: Volume 52 , fol. 27, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca> [accessed March 26, 2008].

“Madame Montour,” a trader, translator, and land broker. Geneviève’s cousin, Isabelle’s son from her second husband, the Oneida headman Carondawana, was Andrew Montour, who before the end of his life wielded great influence as the cultural intermediary “French Andrew” on the New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio frontiers. The family’s connections extended to Caughnawaga as well (where the Montour family, remains prominent to this day).<sup>170</sup> Thus this remarkable 1727 marriage at once bolstered Lydius’s Iroquois ties, provided him new links to Algonquian-speakers of the Great Lakes, solidified his independent access to capital in Montreal, and thus made him a threat to the powerful Desautiers clan.<sup>171</sup>

The degree to which combined influence of Lydius and the *arriviste* Massé family annoyed Montreal merchants of much greater wealth and pretensions may seem surprising. Families like the Desautiers were international importers and exporters of goods; the Desautiers themselves not only traded but operated a ship yard. It was less the size of Lydius’s fortune than the range of his contacts and connections that unsettled them. The Massé Couc/Montour family history at Michilimackinac and Detroit gave Lydius more direct access to prime furs in the west than virtually any other single figure in Montreal. By the 1720s most of the furs smuggled from Montreal to Albany originated in the Great Lakes region and Lydius’s contacts at the source easily outran those of the Desautiers. From being a useful adjunct to the family’s enterprise, Jean-Henri Lydius had suddenly become a menace to the Desautiers’ future.

Lydius emerged as the Desautiers’ competitor at a time when *la traite illégale* was thriving. French government interference was nonexistent as long as English strouds, brass kettles, arms, and brandy passed northward from Albany; British officials had little incentive to interfere with the accumulation of thousands of packs of pelts in the warehouses of Albany

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<sup>170</sup> Ross Montour, Interview by author, Edge Water Café, Kahnawake, Quebec, Canada, 14 June, 2010.

<sup>171</sup> Sivertson, *Turtles, Wolves, and Bears*, 110; James Merrell, *Into the American Woods: Negotiations on the Pennsylvania Frontier* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999), 76-77.

merchant families. The Iroquois hunters who harvested beaver and other furs during the winter and the Iroquois porters who transported the furs from New France to New York during the summers prospered as well in the seasonal rhythm of the trade.<sup>172</sup>

Everyone in Albany in the 1720s recognized that the Canada trade was the economic engine that supported the Hudson River port. In Montreal, even the government officials tasked with quelling the Albany trade resigned themselves to their ability to collect bribes rather than to stop the illicit trade. There were those who saw a future beyond the fur trade. This was of dire importance for Albany, whose beaver populations had long been depleted. Cadwallader Colden stated in 1724 “My inclinations led me to show what Advantages not only the *Indian Trade* would reap by Extending our Frontiers as far as the Lakes, but likewise the *British Trade* in some other Branches, the Soil on both sides of the *Mohawks River* being as Rich as it is possible (I believe) for any Land to be.”<sup>173</sup> Colden’s words represent the profit and ambition present in the Albany fur trade, but also the lust for land that would eventually supplant it.

This general picture of increasing prosperity might have been expected to diminish rather than increase tensions, but the fortunes of the Lydius-Massé, Dagneau, and Desauniers families had risen simultaneously on the basis of a single shared connection to the Sanders family of Albany, which functioned as the main supplier of textiles to all three. As the lives of these families converged in dependency on a single correspondent, tensions between them grew.

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<sup>172</sup> David Blanchard, “Patterns of Tradition and Change: Re-creation of Iroquois Culture at Kahnawake,” (Ph.D. Diss, University of Chicago, 1982),162; Tonia Galban, Mohawk Nation, Interview by Author, Kanatsiohereke Mohawk Community, New York [Near Fonda, New York], June 25, 2011.

<sup>173</sup> Cadwallader Colden, *Papers relating to an act of the Assembly of the province of New-York, for encouragement of the Indian trade, &c. and for prohibiting the selling of Indian goods to the French, viz. of Canada : I. A petition of the merchants of London to His Majesty, against the said act. II. His Majesty's order in Council, referring the said petition to the Lords Commissioners for Trade & Plantation. III. Extract of the minutes of the said Lords, concerning some allegation of the merchants before them. IV. The report of the said Lords to His Majesty on the merchants petition, and other allegations. V. The report of the Committee of Council of the province of New-York, in answer to the said petition. VI. A memorial concerning the fur-trade of New York, by C. Colden, Esq; : with a map. : Published by authority* (New York: William Bradford, 1724) reprinted on *Early American Imprints On-line* (First Series, No. 2512).

If Lydius's connection to his old neighbors the Sanderses was arguably the strongest, other powerful links in trade and government gave the Desauniers options for action that he lacked. Both the Desauniers family and Mme. Dagneau lost little time after the marriage of Jean-Henri Lydius to Geneviève Massé in calling for Lydius's ouster from the colony as a notorious lawbreaker and threat to the welfare of New France. In these demands they had no shortage of allies, for other established French merchant families also resented the rapid rise of the young outsider. This was a threat that none of them could afford to ignore.

The year 1727 thus became a watershed in the history of *la traite illégale*. In the autumn King Louis XV issued an edict forbidding foreign nationals from trading for fur in New France; it also forbade French subjects from dealing in foreign merchandise.<sup>174</sup> This edict, which condemned smuggling on paper, of course did little to quell contraband trade on the ground in Montreal; French *petits et grands marchands* continued much as always, if perhaps with heavier costs from the bribes that officials charged with enforcement could now command.<sup>175</sup> This edict and the trade legislation that preceded it equipped Lydius's competitors with the tools they needed to take action against him.

Lydius's opponents accordingly began to dog him with civil suits and criminal prosecution immediately following the promulgation of the edict. Just weeks after the edict was issued one Paul Desforges accused Lydius of bribing a *Compagnie des Indes* guard, an act that Lydius and other smugglers performed regularly.<sup>176</sup> Perhaps Lydius made another bribe to avoid further prosecution as the case never proceeded far after the initial filing. Law empowered

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<sup>174</sup> Lettres Patentes du Roi, en forme d'édit, concernant le Commerce étranger aux Isles et Colonies de l'Amérique, *Edits et ordonnances royaux, declarations et arrest du Conseil d'Etat du Roi concernant le Canada* 3 vols., (Quebec: Fréchette, 1854-1856), microfilm, I: 512-520.

<sup>175</sup> Traders and merchants.

<sup>176</sup> PISTARD, Procès contre Paul Desforges dit Saint-Maurice, garde du bureau du castor, accusés de complot pour traite illégale, novembre 1727, Judicial Database, BANQ, Centre: Montreal, Cote: TL4,S1,D3386, <http://pistard.banq.qc.ca> [accessed March 14, 2008].

representatives of the *Compagnie des Indes* to confiscate contraband English trade goods and furs not passed through their doors, something they rarely did before 1727. This oversight cost the *Compagnie des Indes* and the French crown thousands of *livres* each year. In 1727 company agents stepped up confiscation efforts including a raid on one, Jean-Henri Lydius and his wife Geneviève Massé.<sup>177</sup>

Within months a former partner of Lydius, Pierre Sarrazin, *dit* Dépelteau, brought another suit, alleging that Lydius used his wife's family ties to undercut Dépelteau in trading with certain Indians – an accusation that was almost certainly true. In this case, “Mr. Lydius appeared on behalf of his young wife who came from elsewhere.”<sup>178</sup> Despite damning evidence, Lydius once more evaded conviction. But not all his enemies would be so easily put off, and Lydius knew it. Accordingly he took the offensive in the following year, using what must have seemed to his enemies the heaviest artillery of all.<sup>179</sup>

In October 1729, Governor Beauharnois and Intendant Hocquart sent a curious missive concerning Lydius to Ministre de Marine, Jean-Frédéric Phélypeaux de Maurepas. Despite incriminating evidence against him, Beauharnois and Hocquart explained to Maurepas, “we come to Lydius’ defense[. T]he Englishman established [himself] in Montréal, to continue his trade with the Iroquois; we think he will not likely return to New England, and that his actions could prove of great importance to this colony; he could be retained in Canada as an interpreter

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<sup>177</sup> PISTARD, Procès contre Jean-Henri Lydius, flamand, époux de Geneviève Massé, pour trafic de marchandises étrangères, juillet 1727 - 28 juillet 1728, Cote: TL4,S1,D337428, BANQ, Centre: Montréal, [accessed March 14, 2008].

<sup>178</sup> PISTARD, Procès entre Pierre Sarrazin dit Dépelteau, demandeur, et Jean Lydius, défendeur, pour le règlement de comptes de traite, 18 février 1729, BANQ, Centre: Montreal, Cote: TL4,S1,D3525, <http://pistard.banq.qc.ca> [accessed March 14, 2008].

<sup>179</sup> Where noted, the author compared the original French documents, digitized at the National Archives of Canada with the translations in *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New-York: Procured in Holland, England, and France*. The translations are sound and useful as the digitized originals are sometimes blurry or illegible.



for a modest sum (300 *livres*).”<sup>180</sup> This act flew in the face of growing opposition towards Lydius. Not only did the two most powerful men in the government of New France assert Lydius’s innocence, they gave him a salary for his ties to the Iroquois.<sup>181</sup>

What caused this bizarre defense? Perhaps Governor Beauharnois and Intendant Hocquart believed that Lydius would be such a benefit to Iroquois relations that this warranted ignoring so many complaints against him. Or perhaps Lydius, who at this point was both sufficiently well-off and sufficiently aware of the way business was done in New France to know which influential palms could be crossed with greatest effect, placed suitable bribes in the right hands. Whatever the truth of the matter, Lydius emerged as a figure of some consequence in New France in October 1729, one who enjoyed the protection of both the Governor and the Intendant. Lydius was in a position to believe that mere legal harassment and civil complaints would no longer threaten his position. If indeed he thought so, he could not have been more wrong. Lydius would discover his vulnerability in the fall of 1729 when Madame Catherine

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<sup>180</sup>LAC, Lettre de Beauharnois et Hocquart au ministre - on a défendu à Lydius, 25 October 1729, Series C11A. Correspondance générale; Canada, reproduced from microfilm of original, reel no. F-51, Microfilm of the transcript, reel no. C-2389 Original text: Volume 51, fol. 6-8v, Transcript: Volume 51, p. 7-9, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca> [accessed March 26, 2008]. The *livre tournois* was a French unit of account of the *ancien régime*, analogous to the British pound sterling. Both were composed of subordinate denominations made up of 20 units (20 *sous* per *livre* and 20 shillings per pound) each of which was worth 12 pennies (*deniers* or pence). After 1717 the *livre* of New France was (by edict) identical in value to the *livre tournois*. At the beginning of the 1730s one *livre* exchanged for silver worth approximately one shilling at London. In 1730 one French *ecu*, a silver coin worth 3 *livres tournois*, passed as *approximately* equal in value to one British crown, a coin worth 5s., or one-fourth of a pound sterling; this made both the *ecu* and the crown *approximately* equivalent to one Spanish dollar (or *peso*, or piece of eight). Of course few or no coins circulated in New France, which was dependent for day-to-day transactions on the paper money (“card money”) first introduced in 1675. Thus the sum mentioned here would have reflected a reckoning in units of accounts which, if converted to (theoretical) coin would have been roughly equal to 100 *ecus* per year, worth about £25 sterling. John J. McCusker, *Money and Exchange in Europe and America, 1600-1775: A Handbook* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1978), 87-88, 280-85; John J. McCusker and Russell R. Menard, *The Economy of British North America, 1607-1789, with Supplementary Bibliography* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1991).

<sup>181</sup> Maurice Filion, *Maurepas Ministre de Louis XV (1715-1749)* (Montreal : Les éditions Leméac, 1967); Maurice Filion, *La pensée et l’action coloniale de Maurepas, vis- à-vis du Canada, 1723-1749, l’âge d’or de la colonie* (Montreal : Les éditions Leméac, 1971).

Dagneau made a decisive move against him with which she intended to remove him from *la traite illégale* forever.

## WOMEN IN TRADE

The very next month, November 1729, Montreal trader and fur trade interpreter Catherine Dagneau undertook a series of decisive acts that would largely leave her reputation without blemish and result in the expulsion of Lydius from New France. Dagneau began keeping a curious journal. This journal detailed the illicit actions of noted contraband traders, Mohawk porters, French soldiers and officials on the take, and others who made possible the lucrative smuggling between Albany and Montreal. Although Dagneau implicated some of the most prominent families in Montreal, her entries centered on Jean-Henri Lydius. Dagneau's journal was nothing if not artful; it omitted, seemingly in a purposeful way, mention of the Desauniers family, and scrupulously avoided naming most porters and smugglers with whom she herself dealt in *la traite illégale*. Dagneau kept her journal from November 1729 to September, 1730, at which point it had served its purpose and the government of New France arrested, tried, convicted, and expelled Jean-Henri Lydius and his wife from the colony. In addition to the practical purpose it served so brilliantly, the journal of *veuve la Chauvignerie* also created the most detailed and intimate portrait ever composed of the Albany-Montreal trade at its height.<sup>182</sup>

Catherine Dagneau made her first entry in her journal on November 19, 1729. On that day she gave one of the many mentions of the porters whom she knew and those she implicated in wrongdoing. Almost all of the 136 individuals she mentioned were Native and Mohawk, most

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<sup>182</sup> LAC, Dagneau, *Journal*, 1729-1730. For many years this journal has been underappreciated due to its improper cataloging on microfilm at the National Archives of Canada. It is still marked under Colonial Records for New Orleans rather than Montreal. This unfortunate detail has made deeper analysis of this significant but complex document even more illuminating of *la traite illégale* which it records.

hailing from Lac des deux Montagnes or New Caughnawaga, including Taniscaumingue whom she mentioned in this first entry. The second entry is one of the most significant for this story. Here Dagneau made her most damning accusations concerning the neglect of enforcement of the laws against smuggling, and explicitly implicated both Jean-Henri Lydius and Robert Livingston of Albany.

There are approximately eight thousand livres of contraband merchandise in Montreal for the accounts of Lydius, Francheville, and [Couagne], the Indian who transported the merchandise is named Guerregendiague. At the beginning of November, [Livingston], the Englishman wrote to a Montreal merchant inquiring if it was true that Mr. Raimbault no longer had jurisdiction for contraband and if it was that he had cheated [turned traitor] for between thirty and forty thousand livres worth of merchandise under his charge to be returned in good beaver that he already paid him three to four livres per pound, this merchant offered a considerable sum to a person who speaks perfectly the language of the Indians who transport for the English to receive the goods sent from Mr. [Livingston].<sup>183</sup>

Madame Dagneau here implicated another Mohawk smuggler, Guerregendiague. She also implicated as smugglers François Poulin de Francheville and René de Couagne, two very successful Montreal merchants. Together with Lydius she stated that these men possessed on that single day the equivalent of about £400 sterling in contraband goods. In the same breath she condemned Judge Pierre Raimbault, the official in charge of enforcing trade restrictions in Montreal. Raimbault had already angered this English merchant by cheating him of a very large sum (the equivalent in sterling to the sum Dagneau named would have been between £1500 and £2000). Another key clue in this entry came in the final sentence, where Dagneau explained that

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<sup>183</sup> LAC, Dagneau, *Journal*, Le 28 9embre 1729 (287-287B)

“Il est entré autour de huit mil livres de marchandises de contrebande a Montréal pour le compte de: Lidius, Francheville, et de Coüagne [Couagne], le sauvage qui conduisoit les marchandises se nomme Guerregendiague. Au commencement de 9bre, L’Eveston [likely Philip Livingston] anglois a ecrit a un commerçant de Montréal de luy mander si il etait vray que le Sieur Raimbault n’est plus de jurisdictions pour la contraband et que si cela etoit il luy en verroit [enverroit] pour 30 a 40000# [The original has the *livre* symbol which resembles the number symbol but with only one horizontal bar] Marchandise a la charge de luy faire ces retour en bon castor qu’il luy payeroit 3-4# la livre ce commerçant a offert une somme considerable a une personne qui souhter parfaitement la langue des sauvages qui colportent pour les anglois pour recevoir les envoyer du sieur [Livingston].

this disgruntled English “merchant offered a considerable sum to a person who speaks perfectly the language of the Indians who transport for the English to receive the goods sent from Mr. Livingston.”<sup>184</sup> She does not specify who this was, but it seems likely to have been her. She was a noted Iroquois translator and by using ambiguities she could condemn smuggling as an institution while not implicating herself directly.

Superior British woolens for abundant French-Canadian furs comprised much of the contraband trade. The following entry reveals another important function of this exchange.

A canoe coming down from Catarauouay or Ft. Frontenac set sail for Perot Island made contact with a canoe with six places<sup>185</sup> loaded with contraband merchandise. There were three Indians and one Frenchman. The said canoe had passed by the Chambly River. Mr. Dupuis<sup>186</sup> determined that they visited the Indians who carry by hand because it is in their hands that Indians transport china [crockery, likely Dutch Delftware], muslin [likely linen], and Calanderies.<sup>187</sup> The Indians did not oppose him and they are accustomed that this order which is from elsewhere to inform us of the cause which is that they listen to all whom they transport and at no point in transit are suspected of smuggling like these types of merchandise of which the Indians have absolutely no use, the Indians do not use any of this type of china, nor muslin, and Calanderie. The proposal for the Company was to have guards defend during Indian visits that there is nothing in the Indians hands upon entering and exiting the city.<sup>188</sup>

Despite Dagneau’s indication that Natives never used any of these prestige goods we know that Indians, especially those in positions of power in politics or trade often did use or display things like fine European style clothing, crockery, and more. This entry, however, shows that this inter-imperial trade was not simply another route of the fur trade, but a way by which wealthy

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<sup>184</sup> LAC, Dagneau, *Journal*, 1729-1730, 28 November, 1729.

<sup>185</sup> This describes a birch-bark canoe with room for a crew of six, an *avant* in front to set pace and watch for rocks or debris, a *gouvernail* or steersman in the stern to guide the route, with the remaining middle paddlers, *milleux*, providing the main thrust. A canoe of this size would be approximately 24 feet in length and could haul over one ton of freight. Dagneau notes here that while this is the size of the vessel, a light crew of only four men paddled it. See Tappan Adney and Howard Irving Chappelle, *The Bark Canoes and Skin Boats of North America*, For the Museum of History and Technology (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1964), and Timothy J. Kent, *Birch Bark Canoes of the Fur Trade*, Volume I (Ossineke, Mich.: Silver Fox Enterprises, 1997).

<sup>186</sup> Claude Thomas Dupuy, Intendant of New France, 1726-28.

<sup>187</sup> Calenderie was a type of wool cloth with a watered or glazed finish, used to make fashionable garments.

<sup>188</sup> LAC, 24 November, 1729, Dagneau, *Journal*, 1729-1730.

habitants obtained European manufactures more quickly and easily than through typical channels.

In December 1729 she continued, “Lydius sold part of his merchandise to three particular individuals of which were Mr. de l’Ésperance, and Mr. Dumont<sup>189</sup> and they [the goods] are widespread in the countryside and on the coasts where they have been able to make stores (trade houses) since the leaving of Mr. Dupuis.”<sup>190</sup> The detail in which she described transactions raises clear links between her and the smuggling industry. By April of 1730 she recorded, “Lydius sold to Mr. Volant going to the Pays d’en Haut ten pieces of wool broadcloth, of which five were cut into Capots [blanket coats].”<sup>191</sup> This and many entries reveal that smugglers, and Lydius in particular, supplied great amounts of woolen cloth to Native trappers, French traders, and habitants in exchange for furs.

Dagneau also offered many instances of not only smuggling, but the bribery that accompanied it. “Three Frenchmen passed in view of a guard with all the insurance possible, several packets of beaver fur.”<sup>192</sup> In this passage she suggested coyly that beaver fur could lubricate any tensions for smugglers. It is also noteworthy that this instance of smuggling included three Frenchmen and no Natives, this certainly happened, but was not the norm for Dagneau’s accounts, nor for traffic on the riverine highway in general.

Dagneau not only implicated Lydius in smuggling but in other treachery – of which he was likely guilty – as well. On April 22 she explained, “The said Sieur Seruy<sup>193</sup> went to La Prairie to get 14 pieces of wool broadcloth for Lidius, his cousin, and came by a channel where

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<sup>189</sup> Key names and items are underlined in this journal. It is unclear who did this or when. It seems likely that someone in the criminal justice system did this while reviewing Lydius’s case for expulsion.

<sup>190</sup> LAC, Dagneau, *Journal*, Near the 21 December (*environ le 21 decembre*) 1729.

<sup>191</sup> LAC, 20 April, 1730, Dagneau, *Journal*.

<sup>192</sup> LAC, 3 January, [1730], Dagneau, *Journal*.

<sup>193</sup> Pierre Lafleur de Saint-Cerny, husband of M. Élisabeth Carpentier (panise), killed on la rivière Godefroy near Montréal. (Programme de recherche en démographie historique, acte no. 19532) He is the son of the brother-in-law of his mother-in-law Marguerite Couc Lafleur, distant cousin through Genevieve Massé.

no one goes to hide his path, he perished, we saved the pieces and the man who was with him. The same Sr. Seruy had arrived from Orange [Albany] the first of February where he had been for Lidius to whom he reported sales in 6000£ of merchandize. It was he this year who passed the first ice flow of the River de la prairie de la Magdeleine, he had to return the month of May if he wasn't drowned for cheating."<sup>194</sup> Monsieur Seruy illustrated how both the water and the people who plied it could be dangerous in *la traite illégale*.

Veuve la Chauvignerie's journal also offered vivid descriptions of the riverine highway itself. "The son of Maubois has arrived from Albany carrying several bales of merchandise for the merchants of Montreal."<sup>195</sup> She indicated that the most common smuggling route lay past the rapids at La Chine. "They hid at the good man Le Duc's place, six pieces of woolen broadcloth which came from l'Ésperance. The same Le Duc transported to la chine [La Chine] 20 packets of beaver to an Indian named Guerret. They await Tianquoist and Tiangourista, Indians who have returned from Albany and who are great porters for the English."<sup>196</sup> Through Dagneau it is possible to retrace the route between Albany and Montreal and many of Native porters and traders who traveled it.

Of the many Native names given several are nicknames, likely trade names used only in dealing with Europeans. Tiangourista for example means "silver coins," marking the individual as a man of trade. Such a trade name could protect the trader if ever caught, but largely this preserved the individual's identity and name for her or his own use with their own people. Those

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<sup>194</sup> LAC, Dagneau, *Journal*, 22 April, [No Year].

<sup>195</sup> LAC, 21 January [No Year], Dagneau, *Journal*.

<sup>196</sup> LAC, 16 February [No Year], Dagneau, *Journal*.

with French names display their background as baptized Francophiles of New Caughnawaga.

This reflected how Native traders continued to trade with Europeans on Native terms.<sup>197</sup>

The following excerpt disclosed even more clues for us to follow.

Six Indians arrived from New England<sup>198</sup> loaded with pieces of woolen broadcloth and other merchandise of which they made deposit at the farm of the father of St. Sulpice which is at St. Gabriel of which they brought them back by the carriage of Mr. Hervieux who drives the clerk of Mr. Lenneville and left on the backs of two Indians. Many traders between others and Mr. de Francheville have stressed to the English to at no point come here because they ship no longer as freely as at their place.<sup>199</sup>

The porters were once again Native. Moreover, the author implicated Hervieux, Lenneville, and Francheville, all members of respected Montreal merchant families. More revealing is that Catholic priests were implicated. This echoed the involvement of other missionaries involved in smuggling in New France that surfaced later. Another significant note here is that Francheville warned his British clients to slow their shipments as regulations had tightened in Montreal by the time of this account, April 27, 1730. The colonial government had made gains against smuggling by this time, yet the need for the flow of goods and information along the border was greater than ever.

Mohawk women made this trade possible, and yet, clear descriptions of them remain elusive. Dagneau wrote many useful, if vague, descriptions of female Mohawk porters and traders, “Three Indian women arrived loaded with contraband merchandise at Mr. Moriceau’s place, interpreter, and for the account of the said Moriceau they could see from there at what point the commerce cracked into the authorities since this interpreter engaged in smuggling with

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<sup>197</sup> Bill Loran, Mohawk Nation, Interview by author, Kanatsiohereke Mohawk Community, New York [Near Fonda, New York], June 25, 2011. Tiangourista could alternatively mean “metal coins.”

<sup>198</sup> “Nouvelle Angleterre” This signified not New England, but British North America and largely New York and Albany within it. Again, underlining is as seen in the original though it is unclear who did it or when. It was likely part of the judicial review in the case against Lydius.

<sup>199</sup> LAC, 27 April, 1730, Dagneau, *Journal*.

little oversight so he could hide himself.”<sup>200</sup> The observer suggested no surprise that Native women hauled illicit goods, walked the streets of Montreal, or delivered their goods directly to Moriceau. Dagneau implicated Moriceau but left the Native women anonymous so that she could continue to employ them herself. A more precise entry explained, “The Indian woman named Dorothée told me that there two canoes left for Choüeguen loaded with beaver and that four Indians paddled them.”<sup>201</sup>

In a different entry Dagneau recorded an encounter with another Native woman. “Coming out of a sermon of the parish at a quarter after noon I met the wife of Tegouassin, an Indian woman from Sault St. Louis loaded with Indian print cotton, I saw and handled them, there were ten pieces that she took to Lidius’ home for which she left terrified that she would be captured. I could assure her that there is never a guard during the day who does any patrolling and especially when they are warned that that there will be contraband merchandise coming in.”<sup>202</sup> That entry was especially revealing. In it, Dagneau displayed her piety, demonstrated her ties to smuggling while never clearly linking herself to illegal acts. She met with the wife of known-smuggler Tegouassin, examined the India print cloth for sale, but omitted whether or not she purchased any. She did, however, directly implicate Lydius. She also explained her intimate knowledge of guard schedules and the guards’ tendencies to ignore large shipments on arrival, all sufficient to condemn the competition and invaluable information to succeed as a smuggler.<sup>203</sup>

Dagneau never mentioned the Desauniers sisters by name; nor did she ever explain what she did for a living while she listed the dozens of Indians who arrived at her Montreal door with Dutch and English goods in a ten-month span. Nonetheless, her ties to the Desauniers are

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<sup>200</sup> LAC, 29 April, (No Year), Dagneau, *Journal*.

<sup>201</sup> LAC, 16 August (No Year), Dagneau, *Journal*.

<sup>202</sup> LAC, 28 May (No Year), Dagneau, *Journal*.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.



revealed. One of the most significant entries in her journal directly addressed the problem of smuggling at Caughnawaga, yet omitted the name of the Desauniers who were the only possible culprits. Catherine Dagneau demonstrated wit and resourceful purpose in her every move. “I have learned from the daughter of Couagne named Theresse that seven Native canoes left to go to Orange for Chouïagen, they carried ten packets for each canoe. I have learned from the same person that there is a store in Sault St. Louis dealing with the English full of Indian block print cloths, woolen broadcloth, and shirts.”<sup>204</sup>

Marie-Madeleine, Marie-Anne, and Marguerite Desauniers operated the primary trading house at Caughnawaga after 1726. This 1730 condemnation would seem to have destroyed their superior influence in the town and yet Dagneau’s vagaries saved them from prosecution. Officials, and likely most residents of the St. Lawrence Valley, knew of the power and involvement of the Desauniers family, and these influential young women in particular, in the lucrative Albany trade. Ultimately their connections are more consequential than those that Jean-Henri Lydius held.

Catherine Dagneau took care to keep herself and her allies blameless in her damning journal of smuggling. At the same time she used this document as a paper trail to directly accuse and ultimately prosecute known smugglers, especially the young, ambitious, and threatening Jean-Henri Lydius. Dagneau clearly did this to eliminate her competition rather than out of civic duty. By the fall of 1730 Dagneau’s testimony joined a chorus of calls for Lydius’s expulsion from New France. The most powerful merchant families of New France, including the Desauniers, called for action against their able and frustrating opponent.

Lydius may have personally offended the Governor and Intendant of New France who previously protected him or run out of money for the appropriate bribes. More likely, however,

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<sup>204</sup>LAC, 2 June [No Year], Dagneau, *Journal*.

evidence against him, particularly Dagneau's journal, proved too much to dismiss. Madame Dagneau and the Desauniers exerted more pressure than he could. Along with Catherine Dagneau's journal two Catholic priests testified against Lydius in July 1730. They affirmed that he was not sufficiently Catholic; despite his conversion and marriage they suspected him of heretical and subversive activities. One priest, Père Du Lescoat, declared on July 25, 1730, that "...He [Lydius] did not bring his son to be baptized in a Catholic church, he helped an Englishman die still in a heretical [Protestant] demeanor, [manner] and he once performed a Protestant service in the manner of English ministers."<sup>205</sup>

The very next day Father Deat reported, "I have never seen him in my six months' as director of the parish of Montréal."<sup>206</sup> This testimony, while incriminating, was obviously flimsy: both accusations arose simultaneously with no prior objections to the Lydius' lack of piety. Furthermore, Father Deat had lived in Montreal only six months when he testified against Lydius, hardly an extended period; and these two priests proved conveniently near to government offices in Montreal to condemn Lydius. The pair of testimonies did disclose a calculated government case against Lydius. Whatever ultimately motivated the French government, it seems they finally had the evidence they needed to condemn Lydius.<sup>207</sup>

Lydius would not go silently. Before his expulsion, Lydius implicated several of his accomplices. Among these was Father Pierre Lauzon, the priest in charge of the mission of

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<sup>205</sup> LAC, Certificat du curé Du Lescoat attestant que Lydius n'a donné aucune marque de catholicité, 25 July 1730, Series C11A. Correspondance générale; Canada, reproduced from microfilm of original, call number MG1-C11A, reel no. F-52 Microfilm of the transcript, reel no. C-2389, Original text: Volume 52, fol. 27, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca> [accessed March 26, 2008]. Here the phrase "helped an Englishman die," is blocked by translation. It appears that denotes saying a prayer or performing some ritual similar to the Catholic last rites.

<sup>206</sup> LAC, Certificat d'un sulpicien curé attestant que Lydius n'a donné aucune marque de catholicité, 26 July 1730, Series C11A. Correspondance générale; Canada, reproduced from microfilm of original, call number MG1-C11A, reel no. F-52 Microfilm of the transcript, reel no. C-2389.

Original text: Volume 52, fol. 28, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca> [accessed March 26, 2008].

<sup>207</sup> NYCD, Certificates of the Curé of Montreal included with, Messrs. De Beauharnois and Hocquart to Count de Maurepas, Quebec, 15 October, 1730, Translated from the original French, IX: 1021.

Sault-Saint-Louis. Lauzon claimed innocence for alleged connections to illicit fur trading for him and the Jesuit order as a whole. In 1731 Beauharnois and Hocquart said in regards to Lydius's accusations, "there is no reason to suspect Father Lauzon of foreign trading, he often tells the Indians of his mission to abstain from taking their furs to New England...."<sup>208</sup> The accusations Lydius lobbed at Père Lauzon and the Jesuit missionaries at Sault-Saint-Louis strongly suggest that they had been his competitors in the trade, as associates of the Desautniers. The accusation against Père Lauzon denoted either an attempt at retribution for soured business dealings or an impulse of self-preservation. Speaking of the illicit fur trade between Caughnawaga and Albany years later, Lauzon castigated Lydius for his perpetual illicit trading for furs and for leading the Iroquois astray. These allegations placed Lydius and the Desautniers in New France and Robert Sanders and other Albany merchants in an extensive web of cooperation and corruption between French and British empires.<sup>209</sup>

Notwithstanding the numerous participants whom Dagneau named and whom Lydius himself accused, Lydius alone was made an example. On September 28, 1730, the *Conseil Supérieur* of New France found him in violation of the king's 1727 edict banning trade with the British colonies and forbidding the possession of British goods. Hocquart aimed to "make example of Lydius."<sup>210</sup> Deemed too dangerous simply to deport to the British colonies in the South, the authorities fined him 3000 *livres* and ordered him deported aboard the ship *Héros*

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<sup>208</sup> LAC, Beauharnois and Hocquart to Maurepas, 18 October 1731, Series C11A. Correspondance générale; Canada, reproduced from microfilm of original, call number MG1-C11A, reel no. F-54 Microfilm of the transcript, reel no. C-2389, Original text: Volume 54, fol 210-220, Transcript: Volume 54 fol. 148-154, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca> [accessed March 26, 2008].

<sup>209</sup> Jon Parmenter, "At the Woods Edge: Iroquois Foreign Relations, 1727-1768" (Ph.D. Diss.: University of Michigan, 1999), 43-44; NYCD, Messrs. De Beauharnois and Hocquart to Count de Maurepas, Quebec, 15 October, 1730, Translated from the original French, IX: 1020. "Lydius, John Hendricks," Moogk.

<sup>210</sup> LAC, Hocquart to Maurepas, 18 October 1731, Series C11A. Correspondance générale; Canada, reproduced from microfilm of original, call number MG1-C11A, reel no. F-55 Microfilm of the transcript, reel no. C-2390, Original text: Volume 55, fol 249-252, Transcript: Vol 55 fol. 181-185, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca> [accessed March 26, 2008].

bound for the French royal prison at Rochefort. His wife accompanied him, but their son remained a ward – or hostage - of the state, in Montreal. Lydius would never return to Montreal, but his part in *la traite illégale* was far from over.<sup>211</sup>

Neither had Veuve la Chauvignerie completed her role in this story. The day after Lydius's expulsion, September 29, 1730, came one of the most important entries from Catherine Dagneau's journal. This, the final entry, clearly summarized her testimony against Lydius and noted that his expulsion from the colony was already assured.

You remember Monsieur that Lydius of whom you have made all the seizures so we have indicted him to hand over a large part after your departure and finally have discovered by intelligence that he had with the governor of New England<sup>212</sup> to whom he had to give accounts this year of the state of the garrison and the fortifications of Montreal but we are pleasantly surprised that he has been condemned to a banishment from the colony and that he is being prepared to embark for his exit from the colony, we have heard that he shall not find it difficult to return in New England.<sup>213</sup> It must be stated that the person who wrote the journal is as much as likely as he to continue to receive the Indians at her place as they are accustomed to remove themselves sometimes from her husband who was their interpreter and that they did not at all want to go to the new interpreter's house who, however, that this person receives nothing for this to gather every day what these Indians will do for their smuggling. It must further be stated that the account makes mention of nearly five or six hundred packets of Beaver and of more than four hundred pieces of woollen broadcloth without counting the muslins and the India-print cottons and other merchandise and all that wasn't remarked by this one person alone, one can presume how many were done fraudulently and by smuggling here.<sup>214</sup>

Most interesting about this final entry is that it was not the voice of Madame Dagneau. We do not know whose it was. Perhaps it belonged to Judge Pierre Raimbault whom Dagneau had bribed and informed against her adversaries throughout the years; at any rate it was someone in the Montreal court system. The author seemingly offered closure commenting on Lydius's

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<sup>211</sup> PISTARD, Jugement remis au lendemain dans le procès de Jean-Henry Lydius, accusé de contravention à l'édit du mois d'octobre 1727 - 27 septembre 1730, BANQ, Centre: Quebec, Cote: TP1,S28,P17215, <http://pistard.banq.qc.ca> [accessed March 24, 2008]; DCBO, s.v. "Lydius, John Hendricks," Moogk.

<sup>212</sup> Governor William Shirley, governor of Massachusetts and British General aiming to encroachment on the New York fur trade.

<sup>213</sup> British North America

<sup>214</sup> LAC, 29 September 1730, Dagneau, *Journal*.

deportation as a foreign national ultimately prosecuted for trading for furs without a permit. This author also lamented that nearly six hundred bales of fur and four hundred bolts of stroud passed through Montreal by the smugglers catalogued in this journal, a sum he surmised that was only a fraction of the total cost of the contraband Albany trade. This same person seemed happy to be rid of Lydius and yet acknowledged the fact that Dagneau herself was probably as guilty of smuggling and had likely already resumed trafficking illicit goods, translating for Mohawk porters, and filling the void Lydius left.

On October 15, 1730 Beauharnois and Hocquart informed Minister Maurepas that like the *Conseil Supérieur* they had become “convinced that he [Lydius] had entered into illegal trade with the British colonies,” and that the Conseil acted justly to “pass judgment that he should be banished in perpetuity from this colony [New France].” They further informed Minister Maurepas that “we are shipping him to France because it would be dangerous for him to return to his own country.”<sup>215</sup> What turned Beauharnois and Hocquart against Lydius? “We had the honor to report to you,” they continued in the same letter, “My Lord, last year, that this foreigner having connections in New England and with the Indians, it might be dangerous to disturb him in his trade. It would be more dangerous not to send him back to his country; wherefore we have determined to send him to France in the King’s ship.”<sup>216</sup> Ultimately opposition to Lydius combined with preserving Iroquois favor for the French swayed the French government in their action against Lydius.

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<sup>215</sup> LAC, Lettre de Beauharnois et Hocquart au ministre concernant l'affaire de John Hendricks Lydius, 15 October 1730, Series C11A. Correspondance générale; Canada, reproduced from microfilm of original, call number MG1-C11A, reel no. F-52 Microfilm of the transcript, reel no. C-2389, Original text: Volume 52, fol. 21-26, Transcript: Volume 52, p. 20-24, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca> [accessed March 26, 2008].

<sup>216</sup> NYCD, Messrs. De Beauharnois and Hocquart to Count de Maurepas, Quebec, 15 October, 1730, Translated from the original French, IX: 1020.

The skills of trade and diplomacy that had made Lydius wealthy and at least momentarily important enough that the governor and intendant of New France were willing to argue that he was indispensable to the colony, were ultimately used as grounds to expel him once he crossed the wrong factions. The illicit trade between Albany and Montreal, meanwhile, continued to thrive. In Lydius's absence the Demoiselles Desautiers resumed their position as the leading illicit traders in Montreal and at Caughnawaga. Robert Sanders, the Cuylers, Schuylers, Livingstons, and others continued their trade from Albany unabated. And while Lydius seemed utterly defeated as he and Geneviève rode the *Héros* on the Atlantic highway to the French royal prison at Rochefort, Lydius would soon be stronger and more deeply entrenched in *la traite illégale* on the riverine highway than ever before. The next turn in the story, during the winter of 1731 was one few if any could have predicted.<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> Cynthia A. Kierner, *Traders and Gentlefolk: The Livingstons of New York, 1675-1790* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 64-69; Lawrence H. Leder, *Robert Livingston, 1654-1728, and the Politics of Colonial New York* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1961), 275-281.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE GREATEST FORTUNES HAVE BEEN GOT...BY THE CANADA TRADE: THE ILLICIT FUR TRADE, 1730-1743

#### INTRODUCTION

The expulsion of Jean-Henri Lydius from New France in the fall of 1730 and his subsequent imprisonment at the French royal prison in Rochefort were in large part the product of his success as a trader in Montreal over the previous five years. It was precisely people like John Hendricks Lydius – multilingual, culturally amphibious, connected by adoption and marriage to native groups from New York to Michilimackinac, and able to draw on credit sources in Montreal and Albany alike – who embodied the problem that the French royal edict of 1727, forbidding foreign nationals from trading in New France, was intended to solve. His expulsion and incarceration, measures authorized by that edict, might reasonably have been expected to end his career as a smuggler. Instead Rochefort proved the starting-point of the next, and most successful, phase of Lydius's career prompting one observer to note that "the greatest fortunes have been got...by the Canada trade."<sup>218</sup>

Lydius's rise and the rapid expansion of the contraband trade in eastern North America had coincided with the Anglo-French political détente that Fleury and Walpole had promoted from the mid-1720s. The French edict of 1727 and Lydius's 1730 removal indicated unease at the size and vigor of *la traite illégale*, but did not herald a sustained push against smuggling. Instead government officials who had too much to gain by forbearance backed off enforcement after making an example of Lydius and permitted smuggling to thrive. Confounding British and

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<sup>218</sup> Wraxall, IA, I: 141.

French trade restrictions, the illicit trade grew because colonial demand and an inefficient mercantile system made it fundamental to economic life in the empires of England and France.<sup>219</sup>

Lydius had tested the limits of his influence and learned the hard way that one could not flout the law in New France if he had enemies who were willing to use the law against him. The trade as a whole, however, went on undiminished. Lydius's competitors the Desauniers, Madame Dagneau, and others, merely expanded the scope of their business operations to fill the vacuum he had left, taking full advantage of the peace and prosperity that reigned on the riverine highway until the onset of the War of the Austrian Succession. Smugglers remained exposed to risk, but profits urged them on in a flexible system that was essentially unregulated.

Three developments promoted peace and prosperity on the riverine corridor in this period. First, Lydius evaded French justice and re-established himself at the Albany end of the trade route. Second, Montreal smugglers like Dagneau and the Desauniers found that their old competitor was willing to do business and so forged mutually profitable ties with Lydius and his associates to the south. Finally, the Iroquois took advantage of the profits to be made and rebuilt their influence in the region as mediators between empires. Their influence would increase in the region until the era of King George's War.

### EXPULSION AND REVIVAL

The circumstances of Lydius's departure from New France are as obscure as those of his unexpected return to North America. Lydius and his bride Geneviève Massé Lydius left

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<sup>219</sup> B.W. Hill, *Sir Robert Walpole: 'Sole and Prime Minister'* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1989), 153; Jeremy Black, *Walpole in Power* (Sparkford: Sutton Publishing, 1999), 32-33.



Montreal on the *Héros* September 28, 1730. His fall had been rapid; his recovery tells us much about the links between trade, politics, and family in the eighteenth-century Atlantic World.<sup>220</sup>

Lydius's expulsion splintered his family. Just months prior to their departure the couple had baptized a son, Henri, in Montreal. The couple left Henri in Montreal during their expulsion though it is not fully clear why or with whom. It is easy to see that parents would not want to expose an infant to the realities of a French prison, more opportunities for the youth available in Montreal. Moreover Massé relatives including Geneviève's sister Françoise and her father Michel, certainly remained in his life and likely cared for the boy. Despite obvious emotional strain, one might have suspected the *de facto* status of the child as hostage would have encouraged Lydius's compliance with French imperial imperatives. Instead, Lydius found his own path out of incarceration and ultimately back into North American smuggling. The couple would rarely see their son even after their return to North America.<sup>221</sup>

Madame Lydius accompanied her husband to Rochefort not because she had been convicted of a crime but because those who were incarcerated in eighteenth-century French prisons were responsible for providing most of their own clothing and subsistence. Geneviève would have enjoyed a degree of freedom of movement that would be invaluable for Lydius, and crucial to his survival. Without her aid his prospects would have been far grimmer than they were when they arrived at the Royal prison of Rochefort in the winter of 1731. Little is known of his brief imprisonment. Shortly after his arrival, however, he convinced the warden at Rochefort, by speaking Dutch, that he was in fact a wealthy Dutchman with vast holdings in

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<sup>220</sup> Jan Grabowski, "Les Amérindiens domiciles et la 'contrebande' des fourrures en Nouvelle-France," *Recherches Amérindiennes au Québec* 24.3 (1994): 45-52; Peter Moogk, s.v. "Lydius, John Henry," DCBO; Jean Lunn, "The Illegal Fur Trade Out of New France, 1713-1760," *Report of the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Society* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1939): 61-66.

<sup>221</sup> BANQ, 20 Septembre 1735, Engagement de Henri Lidieus (5ans), natif de Montreal; par Nicolas-Gaspard Boucault, conseiller du Roi et son procureur au siege de la Prevote et Amiraute de la ville de Quebec, a Michel Bertier, chirurgien de l'Hotel-Dieu de Quebec, Notaire: Hiché, Henry CN301 S135 (reel) M-173.487 – Pg 2399-2401.

New France and elsewhere and that he should be repatriated to Holland.<sup>222</sup> Such a claim evidently caught the attention of any warden and forced him to consider the influence an influential detainee might have with government officials. For this reason – or perhaps merely because Lydius could offer a sufficient bribe -- the warden, acting without timely communication with New France, released him on parole. That very winter, Lydius was discharged and placed on a ship bound for the Netherlands. Details of the release are vague, but the official reaction suggests that Lydius had either been able to deceive the relevant officials or quickly make friends in high places.

Minister of Marine Maurepas wrote Governor Beauharnois about their prisoner in the following mixed message in the Spring of 1731: “The king approves of your conduct in the Lydius affair: [after] his incarceration in Rochefort, we released him go to Hollande, it is necessary to quickly follow and monitor his accomplices.”<sup>223</sup> The careful case built against Lydius in New France including the damning journal maintained by Madame Dagneau was forsaken “to quickly follow and monitor his [Lydius’s] accomplices.”<sup>224</sup> Had Maurepas released one criminal in order to catch many more? If so, he may have been sending a veiled warning to Beauharhois, who would have realized that to catch and convict all of those who transacted business with John Henry Lydius would have implicated powerful families including the Desauniers. Or perhaps this official story merely covered the duplicity of the officials who authorized his release. In any case he had escaped and his associates and competitors managed to evade prosecution and imprisonment altogether. In less than a year he would be operating a

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<sup>222</sup> Moogk, s.v. “Lydius, John Henry,” DCBO.

<sup>223</sup> Maurepas to Beauharnois and Hocquart, 10 April 1731, BANQ, Series C11A. Correspondance générale; Canada, reproduced from microfilm of original, call number MG1-C11A, reel no. F-56 Microfilm of the transcript, reel no. C-2390, Original text: Volume 56, fol 11-15, Transcript: Volume 56 fol. 6-12, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca> [accessed March 26, 2008].

<sup>224</sup> Maurepas to Beauharnois and Hocquart, 10 April 1731, BANQ.

new trading post near Albany, helping himself and his old enemies alike to new profits on the Mohawk trade corridor.

Lydius' path back to New York is blurred – perhaps by the intention of the officials who authorized his release from Rochefort. He and Geneviève arrived in the Netherlands in the late winter of 1731, lingered for an uncertain period, then made their way to England.<sup>225</sup> By late summer or early fall they were back in North America, perhaps with the aid of his New York allies, or even his Montreal competitors; no one knows. It is nonetheless clear that Lydius's return benefited both, for in New York Lydius could function as a well-connected correspondent to his Montreal counterparts, to whom he could supply English trade goods, and through whom he could provide French Canadian furs to Albany's hungry market.<sup>226</sup>

Lydius next appeared in the New York public records in a proclamation recording a transaction he made in the winter of 1732, when he concluded a private treaty with the Mohawk nation – an act clearly illegal, and indeed almost unimaginable, under the British policy that forbade any individual to buy lands directly from a sovereign native entity like a member nation of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. Haudenosaunee clan mothers and elected headmen likewise rarely – if ever – dealt with individuals. Nonetheless, on February 1, 1732, Lydius induced certain Mohawk chiefs – likely those not rightfully appointed – to cede him two vast tracts of land, one on Otter Creek near the confluence of Lake Champlain and the Hudson River, and another on Wood Creek. Lydius references this treaty over many years by the 1760s citing it as justification to sell thousands of acres of the land for extraordinary profit.<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> Maurepas to Beauharnois and Hocquart, 10 April 1731, BANQ; Moogk, s.v. Lydius, John Henry, DCBO.

<sup>226</sup> Moogk, s.v. Lydius, John Henry, DCBO.

<sup>227</sup> Colden, *By the Honourable Cadwallader Colden, Esq; president of His Majesty's Council, and commander in chief of the province of New-York ... A proclamation: Whereas it appears that John Henry Lydius, of the city of Albany, claimeth property in two large tracts of land, lying within this His Majesty's province of New-York ... Given under my hand and seal at arms, at Fort-George, in the city of New-York, the eighteenth day of February 1761* (New York: Printed by William Weyman, 1761) in *Early American Imprints*, Vol. I: 1639-1800 (7 of 7) Evans

The grant and deed were drafted on February 1, 1732 between Lydius and the Turtle Clan member Carrigohetejonijagarawe. It seems that at the time that affection for Lydius's father helped secure this transaction. It also appears that Lydius's adopted Turtle Clan Mohawk family still genuinely respected him. Whether or not Carrigohetejonijagarawe and the other Mohawks who signed this document had any authority to negotiate treaties, it seems they did sign the treaty of their own free will. This treaty proved significant for the Iroquois and Lydius. Lydius first used the land to reinsert himself into the trade corridor he knew so well. Perhaps emboldened by his success, in time he grew more unscrupulous in his business tactics, coming to cheat Indians in land deals at any chance – a habit that earned him the ire of most Indians in the northeast, including his Mohawk kin who had loved and protected him for years.<sup>228</sup> But this was not yet the case in 1732; so far as anyone knew, Lydius had merely acquired title to lands crucial to his ability to move trade goods from a trading post near the confluence of Otter Creek and the Hudson to the Wood Creek portage, leading to the Lake George-Lake Champlain-Richelieu River drainage, whence they could be transported by canoe to Canada.

The fact was, however, this 1732 land transaction did not merely cover territory of an extent sufficient to construct a couple of storehouses connected by a portage road, but rather lands on Otter and Wood Creeks that measured 60 by 24 miles, or 1040 square miles – more than 900,000 acres. Such a grant was not as large as the proprietary colonies of Pennsylvania or Maryland, but the acquisition of land in colonial New York approximately equal in extent to the English county of Kent was noteworthy. The transaction was also done by Lydius alone, thereby

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Collection, 8947-8951, Microfiche; John Henry Lydius, *Deed Book*, 1762. New York Historical Society. Each deed was for 1/60 of township 28 in a town called Hartford on westerly side of Otter Creek. The sales ran from 13 January to 9 April 1762. Almost all were in Dutch to Dutch buyers who likely never saw this property. Lydius's claim to this land rested upon his questionable 1732 treaty with the Mohawk.

<sup>228</sup> Early manuscript transcription of a deed from Mohawks: Carrigohetejonijagarawe et al. to John Henry Lydius, February 1, 1732. *John Henry Lydius Papers*, Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence, R.I. Manuscripts Division, <http://www.rihs.org/mssinv/Mss545.htm> [accessed July 22, 2011].

circumventing the powerful families like the Livingstons and DeLanceys who typically doled out gifts or sales in land. The transaction garnered Lydius both envy and admiration for securing such an acquisition in such short order. It also surely earned him further scrutiny from anyone in Albany who had had cause to distrust him before his removal to New France in 1725.<sup>229</sup>

Lydius's abuse of the trust of Turtle clan Mohawks who believed they were honoring connections first forged by his father eventually caught up with him, but not until many years later. By February of 1732 it was clear is that Lydius was wasting no time in founding a trading post on Otter Creek along the main portage between the Hudson River and Lake St. Sacrement (Lake George), which he humbly named Fort Lydius. This placement was strategic. No manufactures could leave Albany without passing through the post. It was equally impossible to circumvent Fort Lydius when shipping furs south. From this position Lydius chiefly supplied illegal English trade goods to Canada. The post also made him privy to valuable information about the humor of Iroquois porters, the position of French troops, and the markets in Montreal. This return to New York made Lydius the Desauniers' trusted supplier of fine English goods rather than their hated rival.<sup>230</sup>

Lydius wasted no time establishing and improving Ft. Lydius, spending much of his time there in the 1730s. He also kept his mother's stone house in Albany at the northeastern corner of State and Pearl Streets, which he refurbished into a finely-appointed home fit to welcome influential guests visiting Albany. Geneviève and the Lydius children stayed there while Lydius himself journey to Fort Lydius to manage his booming trade interests.<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> Cadwallader Colden, *The Letters and Papers of Cadwallader Colden...*, vols. I-V, (New York: Printed for the New York Historical Society, 1918-1937), II: 52; Copy of Sieur de Beaubassin's Procès-verbal, Fort St. Frederic, 2 March, 1744, Translated from the original French, *NYCD*, IX: 1101-1102; Finton O'Toole, *White Savage: William Johnson and the Invention of America* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2005), 124.

<sup>231</sup> CAP, s.v. "The Elm Tree Corner," <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/loc/elmtreecorner.html> [accessed July 22, 2011]; CAP, s.v. "Isabella Rachels Lydius," <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/bios/r/irlydius4613.html> [accessed

In this period of their marriage Madame Lydius continued to be a great help to John Henry by bringing him into connection with her Algonquian-speaking kin, and particularly her cousins the Montours. By the summer of 1733, the couple had already reintroduced themselves to the Albany trade and to Albany society. One clue into this ascent is a fine Dutch hymnal owned by Lydius. Its kid parchment binding still bears the name J. H. Lydius and contains hymns and Psalms in Dutch. Interestingly the last thirty pages served as a letterbook. Lydius penned all but one of these letters, in Dutch; the final copy was a letter written not by John Henry, but by Geneviève Massé Lydius herself, in French. Even more curious was that the final dozen pages or so have been ripped out of the volume. It is unknown what was on these pages, when they were removed, by whom, or why.<sup>232</sup>

The lone French letter in the hymnal holds remarkable importance. It was dated 20 July 1733, and offers many insights. Geneviève Massé Lydius wrote this letter herself demonstrating how she handled affairs for the good of the family and was a confident and capable French creole woman. She wrote it to her sister Françoise Massé, who had married the Montreal *petit marchand* Pierre Leduc-Souligny in 1731 while the Lydiuses were away in Europe.<sup>233</sup> This marriage, her literacy, and her sustained relationship with Geneviève's enduring connections to, and influence within, Montreal society, where Françoise performed tasks for John Henry and his bride. In July 1733 Geneviève informed her sister that that "...Philip Liviston [Livingston] could in all truth be counted the greatest rascal and the biggest cheat that ever there was on the

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July 28, 2011]. John Henry's mother Isabelle lived in the home until her 1745 at which time Lydius held all claim to it.

<sup>232</sup> Johannes Henricus Lydius, *Copybook of Hymns, Psalms, etc.* in Dutch, ca.1730-1735, Albany Institute of History and Art, Albany, N.Y. (Hereafter referred to as Albany Institute) Includes copy of letter written by Geneviève Massé Lydius to her sister François Massé Leduc-Souligny dated 20 July, 1733. Translation by author.

<sup>233</sup> Montour Family Lineage, Compiled by James P. LaLone, 1989 reprinted on <http://genforum.genealogy.com/ai/messages/6482.html> [accessed July 22, 2011].

face of the earth,”<sup>234</sup> strong – even slanderous -- words that demonstrated the intention of the Lydiuses to disadvantage the Livingston clan in their relentless hunt for wealth and influence in the Canada trade.

But how did this come to pass? Had relations between the Livingstons and Lydius soured over time, or had they always resented each other? As competitors it is possible that they were always at odds and yet neither family would be quick to let animosity interfere with profit. Lydiuses maintained ties to the Wendell family, the Sanders clan, and the DeLanceys, all of whom had competed against the Livingstons in the 1730s. Ultimately the DeLanceys organized a competing faction counter to the Livingstons that blended trade and politics. Geneviève Lydius offers a rare example of colorful colonial language even if the story behind it remains unclear.

Massé’s letter offers a description of a curious incident from the courtyard of their Albany home that July of 1733, “as Mr. Lydius went to let the water out of the courtyard, someone gave him an epee stab in the arm that went clear through. If it had been struck a little more forcefully, he would not have escaped with his life. It has been rumored about Albany that it must have been the General and the Jesuits who had sent someone to assassinate him.”<sup>235</sup> Geneviève, demonstrating her keen intellect, referred to the governor general of New France, the marquis de Beauharnois, who had first defended Lydius, then ordered his arrest and ordered his expulsion. Lydius’s escape from Rochefort had done nothing to recover Beauharnois’s esteem, while the Jesuit fathers, whom Lydius had accused of smuggling at Sault-Saint-Louis during his own trial, had reason to loathe him. It was also possible, of course, that rivals at Albany, or

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<sup>234</sup> Johannes Henricus Lydius, *Copybook of Hymns, Psalms, etc.* Albany Institute.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

Livingston himself, could have behind this incident. Lydius had never lacked the capacity to make enemies. His survival now bred growing resentment of his success.

Links between the Wendell, Livingston and Lydius families came into close relief in the early 1730s. During the winter of 1732, just after Lydius's re-emergence in New York, Philip Livingston entered a lawsuit against Lydius, apparently in an effort to prevent him from entering into commercial competition with the Livingstons in Albany. Evert Wendell defended Lydius, who survived this litigation with his reputation intact. The case likely related to Lydius's earlier acquisition of his deed to Mohawk lands and the mysterious attempt on his life. The timing revealed more than coincidence.<sup>236</sup>

Even while Madame Lydius lambasted the governor-general, Beauharnois still knew little about the Lydiuses's actions. By October of 1733, Beauharnois learned of Lydius's return to North America and resented Lydius's New York endeavors. "Beauharnois opposes all English enterprises at Lake Champlain (illustrated by Lydius' establishment at the source of Otter River [creek])."<sup>237</sup> This complaint lay in a large list of grievances against British encroachment to New France. It is also clear from this statement that Beauharnois, Maurepas, and a host of other French and Canadian merchants and officials had not forgotten Lydius. Furthermore by 1733 once again French concern over smuggling surged, but enforcement did not. Indeed this demonstrates that New France wished to monitor Lydius presuming correctly that he would continue smuggling goods on the corridor between Albany and Montreal, this time from the South.

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<sup>236</sup> NYHS, Evert Wendell, 19 January 1732 and 8 June 1733 and 4 October 1733, *Docket Book, 1723-1740, Albany*, Wendell Family Papers.

<sup>237</sup> LAC, Compagnie des Indes to Hocquart, October 14, 1733, Series C11A. Correspondance générale; Canada, reproduced from microfilm of original, call number MG1-C11A, reel no. F-59 Microfilm of the transcript reel C-2390, Original text: Volume 59, fol 163-206 and Transcript: Vol 59, fol. 125-172, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca> [accessed March 26, 2008].



Only one week after this report was issued, Geneviève's sister, Françoise Massé Souligny, died and was interred at Notre-Dame-de-Montreal on October 20, 1733. She certainly had time sufficient to spread ill will against Philip Livingston in Montreal as instructed in Geneviève's July 1733 letter, but she could be of no further help to the family. Her husband, however, was still able to offer his aid. Pierre Leduc-Souligny spent the rest of his life (seven years) trading for furs in Prairie du Chien and La Baye of the western Great Lakes Region.<sup>238</sup> It is unclear if Leduc conducted business for Lydius there, but like most traders of the era, neither man was likely to pass up trading partners bound by family. Lydius still held strong ties through trade and kin all throughout the *pays d'en haut* including Michilimackinac, Detroit, and Wisconsin posts.<sup>239</sup>

It took only months for John Henry and Geneviève Lydius to escape incarceration in France and establish themselves as fur traders in New York. They had to leave their son Henri in New France, a stinging loss. And yet, in short order, the couple re-entered familiar Albany social circles, inter-imperial trade networks, and Native kinship frameworks. Lydius, however, was not the only one who would profit from smuggling after his return from France.

## THE CANADA TRADE

Despite Lydius's 1730 expulsion from New France illicit trade thrived in New York, New France, and in between. The following decade was a period of great profit during which Mohawk smugglers became ever more deeply engaged in European markets and the influence of

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<sup>238</sup> Prairie du Chien still stands at the strategic confluence of the Mississippi and Wisconsin Rivers and La Baye, also known as Le Baie des Puants – “Stinking Bay” or “Bay of the Winnebago People” is now known as Green Bay in the present-day state of Wisconsin. The *pays d'en haut* translates as “Upper Country” and is the general term for the Great Lakes Region extending down into the Ohio Valley.

<sup>239</sup>“Pierre Leduc-Souligny,” *Barnum Family Genealogy 1350 to Present* <http://www.barnum.org/fam05434.htm> [accessed July 22, 2011]. Following the death of Françoise Massé, he traded and travelled in Wisconsin marrying two more women both in Montreal between journeys to the upper country: Marie-Françoise Bouchard-Vallée in 1744 and Agathe de Langlade in 1748. Langlade was part of an influential fur trade and military family.

the Haudenosaunee in French and British circles grew. Ultimately these developments depended on the Anglo-French détente that Fleury and Walpole had achieved in the decade after Queen Anne's War and maintained until the early 1740s. The result was a golden age of between the Hudson and the St. Lawrence that lasted nearly two decades.

In Montreal, Madame Dagneau, the Desauniers, and other Montreal families supplanted Lydius and further entrenched relationships with Albany traders; Iroquois porters, intermediaries, and traders expanded their shipments of goods from New York to satisfy the growing demand in Montreal for British and Dutch manufactures. Albany traders demanded even more furs with which they sustained their businesses despite New York's depleted fur populations. The environment granted Montreal traders success with less imperial pressure from Paris or violent competition from Britain.

Although her documentary trail grows dim after she ceased keeping her diary in the fall of 1730, Catherine Dagneau continued to participate in the trade, acting as a translator and operating as a recipient of smuggled goods; indeed, it is likely that her business expanded in Lydius's absence.<sup>240</sup> The marriage of her daughter, Marie-Josèphe Maray, to the prosperous landholder Bonaventure Le Gaurder in Montreal on August 1, 1740, indicates Dagneau's status did not diminish.<sup>241</sup> She herself seems not to have remarried, but rather continued to use her family name until she died in Montreal in July 1750.

The Desauniers sisters engaged more than ever in contraband furs and goods from their comfortably appointed trading house at Caughnawaga in the 1730s. English associates in Albany, especially Robert Sanders, continued providing Iroquois porters with the goods that kept

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<sup>240</sup> LAC, 29 September 1730, Dagneau, *Journal*.

<sup>241</sup> s.v. "Bonaventure le Gardeur," *Généalogie Québec* <http://genealogiequebec.info/testphp/info.php?no=98941> [accessed July 28, 2011].

their shelves well-stocked. Once Lydius re-emerged on Wood Creek in 1732, their old competitor became their link to Sanders and other prominent Albany contacts.<sup>242</sup>

The influence of their powerful father and brother permitted the sisters a degree of economic power truly exceptional for single women in the male-dominated society of New France; it depended in equal part on the ties they built with the people of New Caughnawaga and the Jesuit priests with whom they worked.<sup>243</sup> From the perspective of official Montreal their trading work was auxiliary to the proselytizing and civilizing activities of the mission. Only those directly involved with the illicit trade to Albany understood the degree to which their work produced material as well as spiritual profit.<sup>244</sup> The absence of mention of the sisters in the official record suggests that their family connections in various activities, including shipping, government, and law, continued to serve the sisters well during the 1730s. It was only in the 1740s that their success became conspicuous enough that their competitors began to call for their ouster.

The Desauniers' profits at Caughnawaga depended on the cooperation of the Jesuit fathers of the mission, whose regard for their Native parishioners did not preclude the pursuit of profit in the fur trade, for the benefit of the Society of Jesus, or the welfare of individual priests. During his expulsion proceedings in 1729-1730, for example, Lydius accused Father Pierre Lauzon, superior at Sault-Saint-Louis, as well as the other priests under his direction, of trading with Lydius and of smuggling. Lauzon denied the connection, evaded prosecution, and—thanks to the intervention of Governor Beauharnois—had his name and the names of his priests cleared

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<sup>242</sup> Paul A.W. Wallace, *Conrad Weiser, 1696-1760, Friend of Colonist and Mohawk* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1945), 249.

<sup>243</sup> E.P. Hamilton, "Unrest at Caughnawaga, or, the Lady Fur Traders of Sault St. Louis," *Fort Ticonderoga Museum Bulletin* 11.3 (1963), 155.

<sup>244</sup> Peter N. Moogk, *La Nouvelle France: The Making of French Canada – A Cultural History* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 200), 219.

in court; he went on to become the superior of all Jesuit missions in New France. What Beauharnois represented as a clear-cut case of false accusation against the Jesuits, however, was anything but.<sup>245</sup>

Lydius's accusation, combined with the continuation of the Desauniers' commercial activities at New Caughnawaga after 1726 offers strong evidence for the tradition of Jesuit trade at Sault-Saint-Louis beginning from the re-establishment of the community at its present location in 1716. Smuggling and trade had great utility for the Jesuits. They could use trade items as reinforcement and gifts to converts; both the order and individual priests could use the profits to acquire greater wealth than less favorably situated missionaries, and could at least in principle use that wealth to the glory of God. It is likely that the Caughnawaga Mohawk were not the only ones who chose the new location for the village in 1716. The Jesuits also knew the ideal location lay directly on the riverine corridor to Montreal and the riches that passed along its banks. By the 1730s the practice of priests in cooperation with the Desauniers sisters was significant and clearly profitable.<sup>246</sup>

A cast of Jesuit fathers provide deeper understanding of the personal and institutional involvement in smuggling at New Caughnawaga in the 1730s. All Jesuits at Sault-Saint-Louis engaged in the illicit trade that filtered through their mission and the Desauniers store within it. Father Pierre Lauzon served as the father superior at the Sault-Saint-Louis mission on three different occasions between the 1710s and the 1730s. His concern with commercial interests

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<sup>245</sup> LAC, Beauharnois and Hocquart to Maurepas, 18 October 1731, Series C11A. Correspondance générale; Canada, reproduced from microfilm of original, call number MG1-C11A, reel no. F-54 Microfilm of the transcript, reel no. C-2389, Original text: Volume 54, fol 210-220, Transcript: Volume 54 fol. 148-154, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca> (accessed March 26, 2008); Jon Parmenter, "The Significance of the 'Illegal Fur Trade' to the Eighteenth-Century Iroquois," in *Aboriginal People and the Fur Trade: Proceedings of the 8th North America Fur Trade Conference, Canajoharie*, ed. Louise Johnston (Ottawa: 2001), 43-44; Messrs. De Beauharnois and Hocquart to Count de Maurepas, Quebec, 15 October, 1730, translated from the original French, NYCD, IX: 1020.

<sup>246</sup> Joseph Cossette, s.v. "Lauzon, Pierre de," DCBO [www.biographi.ca](http://www.biographi.ca) [accessed January 22, 2008].

was seemingly inseparable from his religious zeal. In 1732 Father Jacques-Quintin de La Bretonière replaced Lauzon as father superior at Sault-Saint-Louis and continued his policies. On a 1734 visit to France, Lauzon brought young Father Luc-François Nau back to Sault-Saint-Louis, where he replaced La Bretonière, when the latter accompanied a Caughnawaga war party against the Chickasaws in the la Louisiane. Lauzon would eventually return to once again oversee the mission and all the work that the Jesuits conducted there.<sup>247</sup>

Jesuit life at Sault-Saint-Louis was busy; priests filled their days with catechetical and French language instruction for both Mohawk and acculturated Huron converts, overseeing community life as it was carried on in French-style buildings throughout the *reserve*, and engaging alongside the Desautiers sisters in their trade for furs. The trade helped integrate fathers who could not form bonds in the usual way, by marriage, into the Caughnawaga community. Mohawks called Father Lauzon *Gannenrontié* and Father Nau *Hatériate*. While to be given Mohawk sobriquets might or might not indicate full acceptance in the community, the record of the fathers' participation in cross-cultural feasting and other indications of affection suggests that they were deeply involved in Caughnawaga's life on every level. Haudenosaunee people named things in their language to address them in conversation. European goods and people earned Mohawk names as they entered *kanienke*; sometimes this signified a special meaning, but at a minimum served to integrate the person into Haudenosaunee culture.<sup>248</sup>

It remains unclear whether the Mohawks valued Jesuits more for their familiarity with the gospel or for their ability to procure and distribute such British manufactures as the "Indian

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<sup>247</sup> Ibid.; André Côté, s.v. "La Bretonière, Jacques-Quintin de," DCBO [www.biographi.ca](http://www.biographi.ca) [accessed January 22, 2008]; Lucien Campeau, s.v. "Nau, Luc-François," DCBO [www.biographi.ca](http://www.biographi.ca) [accessed August 1, 2011].

<sup>248</sup> André Côté, s.v. "La Bretonière, Jacques-Quintin de," DCBO [www.biographi.ca](http://www.biographi.ca) [accessed January 22, 2008]; Lucien Campeau, s.v. "Nau, Luc-François," DCBO [www.biographi.ca](http://www.biographi.ca) [accessed August 1, 2011].

block print cloths, woolen broadcloth, and shirts” that were available in New Caughnawaga.<sup>249</sup>

In practice the Mohawks were no more likely to be concerned about the mingling of spiritual and material benefits provided by the Jesuit mission than the Jesuits were to be concerned about the moral complexity of their own position in profiting from ties to one of the most powerful merchant families in Montreal in return for providing that family with the useful alibi designation of mission trader.<sup>250</sup> The demoiselles Desautiers fit into this complex set of relationships like a key into a lock.

Meanwhile the Jesuit order took great pains to maintain a strong hold on New Caughnawaga during the 1730s to protect its interests in trade to Albany. Viewing the Jesuit order as an institution it is clear that growth to its involvement in the contraband trade aided them in all other aspects of their missions in New France and abroad. Jesuit fathers grew so adept at projecting a façade of innocence in smuggling that their involvement in the Albany trade from Sault-Saint-Louis would not come to light until the 1750s. Even then, administrators of the order limited implications to individual priests, thereby protecting the honor of the order, and the profits it had accrued.<sup>251</sup>

During the 1730s smuggling surged in and near Montreal, even as smuggling took on a different aspect from the one it had worn before 1730. The 1730 expulsion of John Henry Lydius made those involved in the contraband trade careful to cover their path, leaving scant documentary evidence. As a result, while smuggling increased to new heights by volume and by profit, specific references to illicit trade in New France slowed considerably. Priests and

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<sup>249</sup> Joseph Cossette, s.v. “Lauzon, Pierre de,” DCBO [www.biographi.ca](http://www.biographi.ca) [accessed January 22, 2008]; Lucien Campeau, s.v. “Nau, Luc-François,” DCBO [www.biographi.ca](http://www.biographi.ca) [accessed August 1, 2011]; quotation is from LAC, Dagneau, *Journal*, 2 June, 1729.

<sup>250</sup> LAC, Dagneau, *Journal*, 27 April 1729.

<sup>251</sup> Cossette; Jean-Marie Le Blanc, s.v. “Tournois, Jean-Baptiste,” DCBO [www.biographi.ca](http://www.biographi.ca) [accessed January 22, 2008].

profiteers carefully guarded their interests in the Albany trade. At the same time traders, merchants, porters, and middlemen confronted similar questions of growth and profit in colonial New York.

## IROQUOIS TRADE

Trade flourished for Iroquois porters, middlemen, and traders during the 1730s. The Iroquois League used its position of leverage between the French and the British to great effect at this time. Clan mothers encouraged their people to ply the waters of *kanienke* that connected New York and New France, recognizing that success of either the French or the British lay in Iroquois hands. Iroquois women continued to instruct European traders, merchants, and manufacturers on what goods, like stroud and wampum, would sell, and on what consequences would ensue should those goods arrive in inferior condition or the wrong color.<sup>252</sup> This Iroquois success also marked a moment of convergence between Iroquois society with the French and the British. The Haudenosaunee wielded considerable influence that would continue to grow. They remained as yet unaware of the danger of dependency upon Europeans, which increased as a consequence of their very success in promoting the trade and widening its scope.<sup>253</sup>

Mohawk women from New York continued to visit their kin on the St. Lawrence and Caughnawaga Mohawks continued to make their sojourns to the Mohawk Valley in the 1730s. This continued to serve kinship and cultural functions as well as seizing commercial opportunities for trade. Iroquois engaged in the trade as they came to appreciate and utilize European manufactures from brass kettles, and steel knives, to colorful woolens. Some of the

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<sup>252</sup> Ms. Ronnie Reitter, Wolf Clan – Seneca, Interview by author, Ganandagan New York Historic Site, Victor, New York, June 29, 2011.

<sup>253</sup> Daniel K. Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Va., 1992, 1994), 268-270.

Iroquois players who chose to enter the trade brought great skills of negotiation and bartering to the business, expanding access to goods which they could in turn distribute among their families, bands, and villages. Individual traders and porters profited but traditions of communal distribution to demonstrate affection and influence that supported the leadership structures that still prevailed.<sup>254</sup>

Like that of the Desauniers, and Madame Dagneau, the success of the *gantowisas* in promoting the prosperous trade of the 1730s left few marks on a documentary record that remains nearly silent during this decade. Mohawk women planted and harvested crops, created tools and materials for daily life, and amidst all their other duties, from political leadership to motherhood, many still managed to trade between Albany and Montreal. Mohawk women often had their own accounts in the ledgers of some of Albany's most prominent merchants. Other women transacted business on behalf of their husbands, perhaps hoping that their gender would yield them better terms of trade.<sup>255</sup>

Iroquois women who traded or transported goods used the French and British systems to serve their families, clans, and people. "When Iroquois women were put in direct contact with the market, they were put in a position for trade, not just transport. They saw opportunity for trade and took advantage of that situation."<sup>256</sup> Women traders and porters continued to exchange, transport, and distribute goods, furs, and information between the two ends of the Albany-Montreal axis. "Women became involved [in this trade] due to their tendency not to

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<sup>254</sup> Gerald R. (Taiaiake) Alfred, *Heeding the Voices of Our Ancestors: Kahnawake Mohawk Politics and the Rise of Native Nationalism* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1995), 46; Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 266-268.

<sup>255</sup> Kees-Jan Waterman, 'To Do Justice to Him and Myself: Evert Wendell's Account Book of the Fur Trade with Indians in Albany, New York, 1695-1726' (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 2008), 17-18.

<sup>256</sup> Peter Jemison, Seneca Nation, Interview by author, Ganandagan New York State Historic Site, Victor, New York, June 29, 2011.



drink alcohol before or during trade.”<sup>257</sup> Such restraint and reliability made women reliable agents for the Iroquois between the Mohawk Valley and Caughnawaga.

Caughnawaga remained the crucial point on the route from Albany to Montreal. Goods and information made their way to Montreal, but not before passing in Mohawk hands at Caughnawaga, and as they did the place grew in importance during the 1730s and 1740s. A satellite of Mohawk culture, commerce, and authority on the St. Lawrence, it was close enough to Montreal to exert pressure on the French, but far away to preserve its inhabitants’ autonomy.<sup>258</sup>

Women were critical to these processes, and to this success. Many grew to be much more than peripheral figures, though descriptions of them are rare, appearing in asides like the following note from the Albany merchant Robert Sanders to a Montreal correspondent:

Monsieur: It is coming on the tenth day that I prepared and sent you 1 Baril of good oysters by 1 Native woman who calls herself Mari Magd [Marie Magdalene] who explained to me that she knows you perfectly well, I hope that this has arrived well-received since I already received your very obligatory letter of 19 Sept by the porter of the present Gaingoton, Sauvage Du Saut [Sault-Saint-Louis or Caughnawaga), with 2 parcels containing 40 Beaver, 357 Muskrats.”<sup>259</sup>

Marie-Magdalene, like so many other Native women, bore a French Catholic name but served the traditional interests of her people. She resided most of the year at Caughnawaga within Nouvelle France, but freely traveled the 196 miles to Albany each year. In the same letter she is identified as being long known, respected, and employed by Pierre Monier and Robert Sanders, two of the most successful merchants at opposite ends of the riverine highway. Each merchant possessed such sway that each carefully hid his path in the illicit trade. Sanders went so far as to

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<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

<sup>258</sup> Gerald F. Reid, *Kahnawà:ke: Factionalism, Traditionalism, and Nationalism in a Mohawk Community* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 14-15.

<sup>259</sup> NYHS, Robert Sanders to Monsieur PMP or Monier, Albany 19, October, 1752, *Letterbook, 1752-58*, Sanders Family Papers, Misc. Microfilm Reel 3, #4.

keep a separate series of coded letterbooks and ledgers to manage his contraband affairs apart from his other investments. Such Mohawk women represented important work and an important role for in both European and Native societies.<sup>260</sup>

Because women's role was so significant, some traditionalist Mohawks, even in the 1730s, worried that deeper engagement with European markets could lead to spiritual misdirection towards Christianity, or a disintegration of Iroquois identity under the pressure of European goods and values.<sup>261</sup> Many Mohawks today call the early eighteenth century the "dark times,"<sup>262</sup> times when Mohawk people turned away from traditional life and grew too comfortable with European ways. For the most part, however, it seems that most evidently saw a positive side to interaction with Europeans. "And so it doesn't surprise me that they [Mohawk women] would be showing up at these far-flung trading posts and dealing at equality with men. They didn't know that they were expected to be second-class citizens. They knew who they were. They went out and did what had to be done."<sup>263</sup> European blankets offered warmth and decoration, Christianity offered new understandings of things that did not always contradict traditional beliefs, and European language offered greater opportunity for diplomacy. Women trader not only sought commercial gain but also valued kinship networks. "That Iroquois women walked to Montreal [from the Mohawk Valley] does not baffle me at all. Family was so important."<sup>264</sup> Like many parts Iroquois life along the riverine highway, views on Europeans were never black and white but a complex shade of gray.

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<sup>260</sup> NYHS, Sanders Family Papers, Robert Sanders, *Robert Sanders Letterbook*, Albany, 1752-58.

<sup>261</sup> David Fadden – *Kayietakeron*, Member of the Mohawk Nation, Interview by author, Big Bear Café, Akwesasne, Mohawk Reservation, New York, June 22, 2011.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid.

<sup>263</sup> Darren Bonaparte, Member of the Mohawk Nation, Interview by author, St. Regis Mohawk Reserve, Ontario, Canada, June 22, 2011.

<sup>264</sup> Reitter Interview.

Iroquois – especially Mohawk – women, men, clans, and towns thrived in the Albany-Montreal Trade in the 1730s. *Détente* between the British and French permitted Haudenosaunee actors to develop further the trade network they had already established. Individual Mohawk porters, traders, and go-betweens contributed significantly to the prosperity and influence of the Iroquois Confederacy in this period. Astuteness in Mohawk business practices increased, and as they did opportunities for Mohawk diplomacy kept pace. Conflict threatened to disrupt the brisk commerce between Montreal and Albany, but in the central clearings of Mohawk villages as on the streets of the colonial cities, affluence grew as *la traite illegal* prospered.

### THE ALBANY TRADE

Trade and politics, normally linked in Albany, intersected with unusual intensity during 1732 with the return of John Henry Lydius and the inauguration, on August 1, of William Cosby as governor of New York. Like many colonial governors, Cosby acquired his office by virtue of marriage and social connections rather than any notable ability as a statesman or awareness of a special call to duty. Cosby's arrival, however, was a signal for powerful Albany families to waste no time in ingratiating themselves to the new leader. Stephen DeLancey quickly befriended and funneled monies to Cosby, an investment that served the DeLancey faction for years to come. It took more than a political appointment, however, to dominate Albany, where trade and politics went hand in hand. Cosby's political future, to an extent he could not have understood at the outset, depended on his ability to get along with powerful New York families and facilitate their interests.<sup>265</sup> If Lydius's expulsion from New France had alerted New York's merchant-politicians to the potential of disruption in the contraband trade, Cosby's arrival

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<sup>265</sup> Patricia Bonomi, *A Factious People: Politics and Society in Colonial New York* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 106-108.

signaled a moment of adjustment when an important British imperial agent had to be accommodated, and if possible co-opted, to serve the interests of New York's political elite.<sup>266</sup>

Support or resistance to Governor Cosby further separated the DeLancey and Livingston families into competing factions. The DeLanceys remained loyal to Cosby throughout his tenure. On August 21, 1733, New York Governor William Cosby rewarded judge James DeLancey with the chief justiceship after squabbling for months with Chief Justice Lewis Morris. In 1734 Philip Livingston sided fully with the opposition party making the factional alignment clear between the DeLanceys and the Livingstons; increasingly it became necessary for anyone who wished to participate in provincial politics to align himself with one or the other of these powerful families. While such prominent merchant families as the Schuylers, Philipses, and Van Rensselaers continued to thrive in Albany,<sup>267</sup> and while opportunities for profit could always sway adherents to transfer their loyalties from one to the other, the DeLancey-Livingston divide shaped politics and trade in the province when smuggling was at its peak.<sup>268</sup> "Our Merchants were fond of the Canada Trade," Cadwallader Colden later commented, "because they sold large Quantities of goods without any Trouble, the French taking them from their Doors; whereas the Trade with the Indians is carried on with a great deal of Toil and Fatigue, and as to the Interest of the Country, they either never thought any thing about it, or if they did, had no regard to it."<sup>269</sup>

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<sup>266</sup> 23 March, 1737, Quittance au Tresorier General par Charles Noland de Lamarque, procureur du sieur Douville, pour paiement de fournitures faite aux sauvages Folles-Avoines, N/11, (mf2535), Collection Baby, Université de Montreal .

<sup>267</sup> Bonomi, *Factionous People*, 63-72.

<sup>268</sup> Stanley Nider Katz, *Newcastle's New York: Anglo-American Politics, 1732-1753* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1968), 14-20; Bonomi, *Factionous People*, 111-122.

<sup>269</sup> Cadwallader Colden, *History of the Five Indian Nations Depending On the Province of New York* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1958), 2: 53-54; Arthur H. Buffinton, "The Policy of Albany and English Westward Expansion," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* VIII (March, 1922), 362-363.

The two great family factions that Colden believed shared nothing but disregard for “the Interest of the Country” were both comparative newcomers to New York. In 1674 the son of a Presbyterian minister, Robert Livingston, arrived in the province from Scotland; in 1686, a French Huguenot, James DeLancey, made his way to New York through the Netherlands. Both men founded families in Albany with interests in the fur trade, lumbering, shipping, the law, and ultimately politics: they advanced by cultivating alliances with older Anglo-Dutch families such as the DePeysters, Ten Broecks, and Schuylers.<sup>270</sup> If families like the DePeysters and Schuylers still owned more lands than the Livingstons and DeLanceys, by the 1730s they had become subordinates to a pair of families who dominated Albany so completely as to make its political life resemble that of an Italian city-state of the Renaissance more than a prominent British North American city.<sup>271</sup>

For John Henry Lydius, a man whose remarkable linguistic virtuosity and familial ties to Native traders constituted his sole store of capital, the way to wealth and power in Albany of the early 1730s depended on the ability to maneuver within this sharply divided political-commercial world. His indispensable connection in this enterprise was Robert Sanders, merchant and civic leader of Albany, who had continued as the Desauniers’ main supplier of English goods after Lydius’s abrupt departure from Montreal. His younger brother John Sanders extended the family business in neighboring Schenectady. Both brothers owed their prominent position to their father, Barent Sanders, a prominent fur trader and Indian commissioner who was in his fifties in the early 1730s and increasingly turning his fur trading business over to his sons; Robert thus enjoyed a respectable position in Albany if not a dominant one. By the early 1730s Sanderses were not too shy to support or attack political or government officials who stood against policies

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<sup>270</sup> Katz, *Newcastle’s New York*, 63-72.

<sup>271</sup> Katz, *Newcastle’s New York*, 157-162; Bonomi, *Factionous People*, 37-39; Mary Lou Lustig, *Privilege and Prerogative: New York’s Provincial Elite, 1710-1776* (London: Associated University Presses, 1995), 28-40.

favorable to their involvement in the Canada trade.<sup>272</sup> Ultimately Robert Sanders's commercial welfare would thrive on Lydius's connections and abilities in Native society; Lydius's political connections and fortunes, in turn, would follow theirs.

Upon Lydius's 1732 return to New York, Robert Sanders became his trusted business associate, probably signaling the reestablishment of a connection that went back to Lydius's time in Montreal, where he seems to have facilitated the Sanders family's connections to the Desauniers family. In the 1730s Lydius and Sanders became very close allies indeed, renewing ties with the Desauniers sisters, to whom he became a supplier of British and Dutch manufactures.<sup>273</sup> Sanders possessed wealth, Anglo-Dutch roots, and a growing political career in Albany. Lydius on the other hand gave Sanders deeper ties to local Turtle Clan Mohawks and to distant Algonquian speakers in the Great Lakes. Sanders dealt in goods from New York, chiefly lumber, grain, and furs, most of which he sold through influential London merchant, Samuel Storke. Other goods, however, went to relatives and other traders in Curaçao and St. Christopher in the Caribbean, long-distance connections that suggest how circuits of trade between Albany and Montreal intersected with larger channels of trade in throughout the Atlantic World.<sup>274</sup>

The Sanders connection offered Lydius commercial and political ties and also brought him into an important kinship network that included ties to their maternal cousins the Wendells. The Wendell family held lands and maintained a successful law practice that served Anglo-Dutchmen in Albany's British colonial courts and acted as a shield and defender for the Sanderses in Albany courtrooms. Since the Wendell family had also been engaged in the fur

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<sup>272</sup> Paul A.W. Wallace, *Conrad Weiser, 1696-1760, Friend of Colonist and Mohawk* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1945), 249; Bonomi, *A Factious People*, 27; CAP, s.v. "John Sanders" <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/bios/s/josanders.html> [accessed September 15, 2011].

<sup>273</sup> CAP, s.v. John Sanders <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/bios/s/josanders.html> [accessed September 15, 2011].

<sup>274</sup> NYHS, Robert and John Sanders, December 8, 1742, To Cousin Lawrence Van der Spiegel, *Letterbook, 1742-1743*, Sanders Family Papers, Misc. Microfilm Reel 3, #3.

trade since the mid-seventeenth century, they also brought ties to Great Lakes trade networks from their enterprises further west at Oswego. The ways in which the Sanders and Wendell families operated in both British and Dutch circles mirrored the ease with which Lydius himself negotiated his way through networks of commerce and communication.<sup>275</sup>

Evert Wendell was one of the most successful fur traders in Albany. Like many he owed his success to a combination of business interests. His trade journal, 1695-1726, offers an intimate glimpse of his success in the fur trade permitting his entry into law thereby entrenching his family as a fixture in the Albany trade. Wendell traded with Native men and women from the Mohawk Valley and with others who traveled from the St. Lawrence Valley to trade with him at Albany. Evert Wendell further established his family when, in 1710, he married Engeltie Lansing, with whom by 1734 he had ten children. Lydius and Wendell's cousins the Sanders brothers maintained close ties and in the 1730s Wendell came to Lydius's aid.<sup>276</sup>

Albany as a whole did not welcome Lydius home with open arms. Yet whatever competitors may have resented his return, none could deny that Lydius possessed shrewd business acumen, impressive language skills, and some of the most extensive kinship and trade ties in northeastern North America. There would always remain a place for such a man in an enterprising town like Albany where the profits to be had in a period of expanding trade made it easy to focus on the opportunities on hand rather than passed transgressions. Lydius addressed his attention to maximizing these opportunities as an affiliate of the powerful DeLancey faction at the very moment when Albany trade and politics acquired the bi-polar orientation that it would maintain for the remainder of the colonial period.

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<sup>275</sup> NYHS, Robert Sanders, 22 January 1753, To Honoured Sir, *Letterbook, 1752-58*, Sanders Family Papers, Misc. Microfilm Reel 3, #4.

<sup>276</sup> Waterman, 'To Do Justice to Him and Myself', 12-17; CAP, s.v. "Will of Evert Wendell," <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/wills/willevwendell2657.html> [accessed August 10, 2011].

## CHANGE IN ALBANY

One more unlikely family entered the Canada trade at the beginning of the 1730s and contributed to the changes afoot in Albany at the time of Lydius's return. A British naval officer, Peter Warren, spent the winter of 1730-31 ashore in New York. His ship, the *Solebay*, spent that winter nearly empty and ice-bound at Turtle Bay leaving Warren with plenty of shore leave and a substantial curiosity about New York. Warren had a solid family background in the Irish gentry, personal charisma, political influence gained from mingling with prominent naval officers and ship owners, and the potential, at least, of building a fortune from the seizure of enemy shipping, should Britain ever go to war. The combination made him an impressive young man on his way up, and won him the attention of Stephen DeLancey and the hand of Stephen's daughter Susanna, whom he married in July, 1731. This marriage increased the DeLanceys' influence in the Caribbean and Europe trades and a valuable set of political connections in Britain as well. It gained Warren ties to two notable New York families, the DeLanceys and the Van Cortlandts, a presence in the Mohawk Valley fur trade, and an interest in land speculation in the Hudson Valley.<sup>277</sup>

Warren spread his influence and sought to gain wealth through his ties to the Mohawk Valley, and though he never lived there himself, he came to understand that success in the Indian trade would require a familiarity with Native ways and values alien to those he knew from his live in Ireland, the Royal Navy, and the fashionable drawing-rooms of New York.<sup>278</sup> The

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<sup>277</sup> Julian Gwyn, *An Admiral for America: Sir Peter Warren, Vice Admiral of the Red, 1703-1752* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004), 22-23; Milton Hamilton, *Sir William Johnson: Colonial American, 1715-1763* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, National University Publications, 1976), 6; ANBO, Gordon E. Kershaw, s.v. "Warren, Sir Peter," <http://www.anb.org> [accessed September 7, 2011]; ODNB, Julian Gwyn, s.v. "Warren, Sir Peter," <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/28786> [accessed September 7, 2011].

<sup>278</sup> Ibid.



following letter illuminates the world into which Warren sought to fit, and from which he hoped to get rich, in the 1730s when French Canadian furs choked Albany warehouses and tempted otherwise legitimate businessmen like Alderman (and later Albany mayor) Cornelius Cuyler into arrangements like those he explained to his commercial correspondents in London.

19 November 1735, Cornelius Cuyler to Storke & Gainsborough, London,

Albany the 19<sup>th</sup> November 1735  
Mssrs. Storke and Gainsborough

Gentlemen,

I have Received yours of the 15 August on the 12<sup>th</sup> Instant, by Capt Payton with a Bale of Strouds & Shalloons your red Strouds are Very good, and your Bleu Strouds, Should be Tolerable good, if the Bleu Coleur was dark Enough I desire you Kindly to observe for the future to send my Bleu Strouds, as dark Bleu as possible according to my Inclosed narrow Corded pattern I have Sent to Mr. John Cruger three Hogsheads & one Poundle of Skins to be forwarded to you for my acct. with desire to dispose thereof to my best advantage Here inclosed goes an Invoice for the Same, also Memorandum of What goods I desire to have Sent in Returnes (via) the Very first opportunity, Except by Capt. Jasp.r Farmer because I have ordered other goods aboard of him I desire you to make the usuall Insurance upon my goods which you shall send me Please to observe that the whole Hogshead No. CC46 which I now Sent you are all white Parchment Bever and as good as Ever Comes from Hudson's Bay, I Expect you will sell them accordingly, all my Skins which I now send you are Very good Pray advise me by all opportunitys of the present prices of Skins & Furrs with you as also how matters stands, on acctt. Of the Expected Warr, I am with much Esteem

Gentlemen your most Humb. Servt.  
Cornelius Cuyler

[Post Script:] You forgot to give me Credit, on my acct. of Sales, for 4 Martins, 1 Fisher and 1 Raccoon, which were in my Hogshead N:2, via Bryant last Fall<sup>279</sup>

This letter is significant for many reasons. The London merchant Stephen Storke's business was to act as clearinghouse agent for Albany furs, a role he played for decades. Cuyler identified blue and red Stroud cloth, the dense woolen broadcloth favored by Native trappers and

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<sup>279</sup> Cornelius Cuyler, Albany, to Storke and Gainsborough, London, 19 November 1735, Albany Institute, MS-2081.

porters as well as provincials, as a primary trade good, insisting that all Strouds must be of sufficiently high quality to outperform French woolens. He also stressed that his blue Stroud must be a deep blue, doubtlessly following the preference of discerning Mohawk clan mothers. Cuyler then discussed what he has sent to Storke to sell, namely furs, and lots of them. Like other Albany merchants and traders Cuyler shipped most of his furs by dry goods hogshead – a 140-gallon cask – rather than in hemp canvas bundles, which he terms here “poundles.”<sup>280</sup>

Even more compelling was the detail and preference that Cuyler offered of his furs and the goods he requested in return. He explained “that the whole Hogshead No. CC46 which I now Sent you are all white Parchment Bever and as good as Ever Comes from Hudson’s Bay,”<sup>281</sup> knowing full well that these high-value *castor sec* pelts were worth the best price his correspondent could get for them, and that they came, not from Hudson’s Bay traders, but from French-allied Indian hunters in the *pays d’en haut*. He also suggested that Albany still had the ability to procure rich furs as fine as those coming from territory further afield. Cuyler demonstrated that even when profiting one should reprimand one’s trans-Atlantic client when he “forgot to give me Credit, on my acct. of Sales, for 4 Martins, 1 Fisher and 1 Raccoon, which were in my Hogshead N:2, via Bryant last Fall.”<sup>282</sup> Into this world of trade and trafficking Peter Warren entered during the 1730s.

In 1736 Peter Warren purchased a 13,000-acre tract of land just west of Albany along the Mohawk River. Governor Cosby, lately deceased, had owned the tract. He in turn had been favorably inclined to Warren, a relationship that Warren had exploited when and he bought it from the governor’s widow. As chief justice Daniel Horsmanden explained the sale to Cadwallader Colden that summer, “Captain Warren has made a very Great Purchase of Mrs.

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<sup>280</sup> Ibid.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

Cosby at Boston 13,000 a[cres] of the Govrs Land at Trohenonder Hill for 110£ how she became so infatuated I know not, Sure it could be so Trifling a Sum ready money that Bewitched her....”<sup>283</sup> The acquisition of so much Mohawk Valley land positioned Warren to enter the fur trade, but Warren had no experience in its intricate expectations. Whom could he trust to manage the vast tract for him?

In the late winter of 1738 Peter Warren asked one of his Irish nephews, William Johnson, to develop the estate as his steward. Johnson, who at this point was twenty-three years old, had been born to a gentry family in Smithtown, County Meath, where his family held lands but he enjoyed neither prosperity nor influence; he accepted what proved to be the opportunity of a lifetime. Both he and his uncle would profit greatly from this arrangement, and colonial North America would be forever altered as a result.<sup>284</sup>

Johnson demonstrated his promise when he arrived from Ireland at Boston in 1738 with twelve tenant families to settle his uncle’s vast tract. Once he settled in the Mohawk Valley he lost no time in developing a robust fur trade enterprise for both Warren and himself.<sup>285</sup> Johnson continued to manage his uncle’s Mohawk Valley enterprises until Warren’s death in 1752 – fourteen years during which the two exchanged warm letters and favors that render all the more puzzling Warren’s decision to exclude Johnson from his will. One clue, however, may be found in an exchange of letters that took place in the opening months of Johnson’s tenure in New York. In the spring of 1739, having already built up Warren’s interests, Johnson purchased a tract of his own on north bank of the Mohawk River, prompting a critical reaction that led Johnson to respond, “I had the favour of yours of the 20<sup>th</sup> of April wherein I find y<sup>u</sup>. are displeased att my

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<sup>283</sup> NYHS, Daniel Horsmanden to Cadwallader Colden, July 23, 1736, Cadwallader Colden Papers.

<sup>284</sup> ANBO, Kershaw, s.v. “Warren, Sir Peter;” ANBO, Jennings, s.v. “Johnson, Sir William;” Milton Hamilton, *Sir William Johnson: Colonial American, 1715-1763*, 6.

<sup>285</sup> Gwyn, *An Admiral for America*, 29; ODNB, Richter, s.v. “Johnson, Sir William;” Milton Hamilton, *Sir William Johnson: Colonial American, 1715-1763*, 7-9.

purchaseing the land, Which in Every Bodys Opinion is a good Bargain, and Can any time I please Sell it for the Money.”<sup>286</sup> Johnson’s explanation that he purchased the land to keep it out of the hands of others and because it offered a site for a saw mill to process some of his uncle’s timber suggests that Warren’s initial, adverse response emerged from a concern that his ambitious nephew might emerge, all too soon, as his competitor.

If so, it was a well-founded fear. Johnson continued serving his uncle, but served his own interests at least equally well, for he intended to use the plot he had purchased not only for milling lumber but as a base for entering into the contraband fur trade. As he explained to Warren on May 20, 1739, “As to my Moveing over where I made purchase, to live there I never had the least Notion in the World of it, but what I meant was that it would be the properest place on the Whole River [Mohawk] for a Store house and Shop in the Winter, by reason of all the High Germans passing by that way in the Winter, and all the upper Nations of Indians, whose trade is pritty Valluable. . . .”<sup>287</sup> In fact this move, and the establishment of the trading post he called Fort Johnson, was exactly what William Johnson did.

Ultimately it was a move that proved profitable for both Johnson and Warren, whose relationship soon transformed itself from that of steward and master to a business partnership in which Warren treated Johnson as a dependent and Johnson took care to phrase reports of his increasingly independent activities in such a way as to placate his absentee (but powerful) patron. Johnson was able to build his profitable trade business alongside that of his uncle in part due to his common-law wife Catherine’s ability to deal with Palatinate German travelers and tenants on the Johnson estate. Johnson and runaway indentured servant Catherine Weisenberg began a relationship in 1739 that would last twenty years and produce three children. The two

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<sup>286</sup> JP, I: 4-5.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid., I: 5.

never married but Weisenburg shared in the duties of Johnson's work, she minded the store and helped foster relationships between tenants and local Mohawks. In a very short time Johnson became a leading figure, as landlord, trader, and speculator, in the Mohawk Valley.<sup>288</sup>

Johnson's key insight was that trade with "upper Nations of Indians," especially Hurons and Caughnawaga Mohawks, could indeed be "pritty Valluable."<sup>289</sup> Johnson was a reputable trader, often giving lavish gifts to influential Iroquois chiefs, but his trade would not have been possible without tapping into the resources of tribes to the North. Like other merchants Johnson had to tread an often fuzzy line between legitimate and illicit trade. By 1740 Johnson had his own trading house on his property and dealt in furs, lumber, grain, and other stores from Native and colonial clientele.<sup>290</sup>

Johnson's entrance into the tale of inter-imperial smuggling between Albany and New France in some ways echoed the earlier experiences of John Henry Lydius. Like Lydius, Johnson entered the fur trade – both contraband and legitimate – at a young age and thrived quickly. Like Lydius, Johnson took special care to build close ties with Mohawk people. And, like Lydius, Johnson was not English and yet lived in an Anglo-centric world. The political, military, and commercial influence Johnson brought with him from Peter Warren, however, gave Johnson an immense advantage. The time when smuggling, land deals, and frontier factions could avoid the scrutiny of British bureaucrats was nearing its end.<sup>291</sup>

Johnson met Lydius upon arrival at Albany, when Johnson needed to be introduced to the fur trade and especially how to deal with the Iroquois. The pair shared many interests by 1740. Upon his arrival Johnson was an outsider with notably good connections to the British political

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<sup>288</sup> Milton Hamilton, *Sir William Johnson: Colonial American, 1715-1763*, 33-35.

<sup>289</sup> JP, I: 5.

<sup>290</sup> Fintan O'Toole, *White Savage: William Johnson and the Invention of America* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2005), 42-45.

<sup>291</sup> Gwyn, *An Admiral for America*, 29; Lustig, *Privilege and Prerogative*, 60-61; 5-7.

elite that in theory ran the empire and Lydius a successful and established Albany merchant with exceptional strength in inter-imperial trade, native languages, and local business connections.<sup>292</sup>

At the outset, the novice Johnson may have followed Lydius's example, or perhaps his advice a little more closely than he should, for in 1743 Johnson faced prosecution for engaging in illicit trade. The Commissioners of Indian Affairs informed Johnson:

Whereas Information Hath been made to us that you have Sent Rum and Strowds for sale to the French or Indians contrary to the Tenor Intent and meaning of an Act of Generall Assembly of the Colony of New York Entituled an act for Supporting the Garrison at Oswego & To Regulate the furr trade in the Country of albany passed in the Sixteenth year if his present majesties Reign [1742] and We haveing also Just Cause to Suspect you to have Acted Contrary to the Said Act Wherefore by Virtue of the power to us Given by the Said Act of Generall assembly you are hereby required and Commanded personnally to be and appear before us John de peyster and Philip Livingston Junior at the dwelling house of Either of us in the first ward of the City of Albany at or within fourteen days after this summons Shall be personally served upon you or Left at your usual place of abode To make oath of the full Quantity of Strowds or other Cloaths Rum or other distilled Liquors you have Sent Carried or transported for Sale to the Indians or french sine the first day of November Last ...<sup>293</sup>

Many significant details emerge from this summons. First, Johnson could not evade scrutiny from colonial authorities merely because of his benefactor's connections to the British Navy and the powerful political faction (the Bedford Whigs) with which he was allied in Parliament. Neither did he avoid trouble due to his links to the powerful DeLancey faction. In fact, the two commissioners who called him to account, John DePeyster and Philip Livingston, Jr., likely proceeded in this matter *because of* Johnson's emerging alliance with the DeLancey faction: they were in effect firing a legal and political warning shot across his bow. Johnson, whose affinity for strouds and rum demonstrated that he had already learned his way into the fur trade, took the warning. By July of 1743, all of the more prudent Albany traders were growing

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<sup>292</sup> Gwyn, *An Admiral for America*, 29-30.

<sup>293</sup> JP, I: 19.

more wary of the French traders and their Native allies as Anglo-French tensions increased in the context of the War of the Austrian Succession.<sup>294</sup>

Despite Johnson's trouble with the Commissioners of Indian Affairs (a group he would ultimately oversee) his reputation and business grew in the early 1740s. He continued to participate, if more circumspectly, in the Canada trade, which was too profitable to be ignored and a wise supplement to the land speculation his uncle encouraged. Johnson's allies in the Canada trade were Robert Sanders, Evert Wendell, and John Henry Lydius. Their ties to the DeLanceys drew them close to each other and to their Montreal contacts. "I wrote Mr. Revaer or III the 19 Oct 1752 & Sent him one Cag oysters..."<sup>295</sup> Or, "...hearty thanks For the limes with which I have drank your Healths Severall times."<sup>296</sup> Such letters and the gifts they constantly mentioned represented the social lubricants of a thriving business.<sup>297</sup>

Montreal's merchants, too, enjoyed the fruits of years of regulatory neglect in what they called the Albany Trade. In Montreal, too, the early 1740s brought more scrutiny of the merchants' activities as colonial administrators again took notice of the disregard for colonial regulation. Governor Beauharnois took a *laissez-faire* approach to the illicit fur trade during most of his tenure, but pressures from above meant that even he could not ignore the volume of trade flowing along the riverine highway to New York. "Almost all the people of the Sault (Sault-Saint-Louis), My Lord, have English hearts, as the Indians express it," he explained to Ministre de Marine Maurepas in 1741, "For this I can blame only their Missionaries and the Misses Desauniers, who make them trade with New-York."<sup>298</sup> The governor even acknowledged

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<sup>294</sup> JP, I: 19; O'Toole, *White Savage*, 43.

<sup>295</sup> NYHS, Robert Sanders to Monsieur PMP or Monier, Albany 19, October, 1752, *Letterbook, 1752-58*, Sanders Family Papers, Misc. Microfilm Reel 3, #4.

<sup>296</sup> To John Henry Lydius, June 1, 1747, JP, I: 898.

<sup>297</sup> NYHS, Robert Sanders, *Letterbook, 1752-58*, Sanders Family Papers, Misc. Microfilm Reel 3, #4.

<sup>298</sup> M. de Beauharnois to Count de Maurepas, Quebec, 21 September, 1741, Translated from the original French, *NYCD*, IX: 107, Translated from the original French, *Ibid.*, IX: 1096.

the role played by Jesuits priests deeply engaged in smuggling. Just at the instant when enforcement of regulations might have recommenced, it was avoided due to more pressing matters of alliance and conflict in the Atlantic World.

Johnson, more than any other, was well aware of the changes in the Atlantic World by the 1740s. His uncle Peter Warren had already commanded several missions to the Caribbean in the War of Jenkins's Ear against the Spanish bringing back plunder and profit that seemingly proved this commercial war could deliver Britain a larger share of the trade, and hence the wealth, of the Caribbean. In Albany unrest grew between Albany businessmen and their contacts in Nouvelle France, as war loomed once again between the British and the French. The War for Austrian Succession grew out of the Anglo-Spanish conflict and by 1744 had engulfed North America in what the colonists called King George's War.<sup>299</sup>

King George's War altered, but by no means stopped, the conditions of contraband trade in the Atlantic World. Smuggling along the riverine highway between New York and New France during this conflict did not cease: it increased, even as the content of the canoe cargoes changed and meaning of smuggling itself altered. Merchants, traders, and porters continued to exploit the weakness along the porous border of the riverine highway. Now, they carried not just Strouds from Albany and furs from the North, but increasingly such wartime stores as firearms and ammunition. Smugglers continued supplying the ritualistic gifts that kept First Nations allied with France and Britain. The face of smuggling changed during King George's War, as did the importance of the goods and information exchanged. The way smuggling developed during the war reshaped the face of empire in North America.

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<sup>299</sup> Gwyn, *An Admiral for America*, 38-41.



## CHAPTER 4

## WARFARE ALONG THE RIVERINE HIGHWAY, 1744-1749

## INTRODUCTION

In 1739 Britain and Spain commenced hostilities in a conflict known by the curious name of the War of Jenkins' Ear – after the English sea captain, Robert Jenkins, who purported that Spanish *guardacostas* had intercepted his merchant vessel off Havana in 1731, seizing his cargo, handling him roughly, and finally mutilating his ear on the mere suspicion that he intended to trade illegally with Cuba. This incident was one of several that justified a declaration of war that in fact had less to do with Jenkins' losses than with Britain's attempt to force open Spanish colonial ports to British traders, particularly slave traders. The war consisted largely of naval and privateering actions in the West Indies, attacks (primarily unsuccessful) on Spanish ports, and border warfare between Georgia and Florida. Most of these operations were inconclusive; some, including most notably a British expedition against Cartagena, ended in humiliating costly defeats. Throughout the war another, more successful, enterprise emerged in the West Indies, smuggling. British and Spanish merchants perfected a system of trade, ostensibly for the exchange of prisoners, under flags of truce. The flag-trucing trade, as it was called, engaged French, Dutch, and Danish merchants as well as those based in the British and Spanish colonies, and brought handsome profits to its participants. The Caribbean fighting and flag-of-truce trade seemed far removed from the riverine highway between New York and New France, yet nothing could be further from the truth.<sup>300</sup>

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<sup>300</sup> Max Savelle, *Empires to Nations: Expansion in America, 1713-1824* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1974), 125-128; Thomas Truxes, *Defying Empire: Trading with the Enemy in Colonial New York* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 3; Richard Pares, *War and Trade in the West Indies, 1739-1763* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936), 3-13.

By 1744 Jenkins' Ear merged into the larger European conflict called the War of the Austrian Succession, which in turn generated an Anglo-French conflict, King George's War, that changed the face of the contraband trade between New York and New France. It did not stop the flow of illicit goods or diminish the role played by Mohawk traders and porters in the exchange of vital information and of trade goods, particularly the warlike stores that became increasingly profitable and significant in the trade. What King George's War did above all was to end three decades of peace between British and France, and draw attention to the persistent commercial competition and smuggling between their American possessions that went on without interruption during the conflict.<sup>301</sup>

King George's War made smuggling a problem along the riverine highway in three significant ways. First, the contraband trade was shown to be too significant for a mere war to stop. Britain's hopes of military success depended upon the information that travelled south along with the furs and pelts that benefited Albany's merchants; the survival of New France in turn depended on the goods and military supplies and prestige gifts that flowed north, which were desperately needed to ensure the loyalty of Native allies. Second, following the Anglo-American seizure of the French fortress of Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island in June 1745, the riverine highway became the main way to get European or Caribbean goods into New France, increasing profits and influence for Native and European traders. Finally, the interpersonal relationships that ensured the unfettered flow of people, goods, and information along the riverine highway before and during King George's War soured as the war drew to a close. The result was a world in which smuggling and those who had engaged in it were increasingly thought by metropolitan imperial authorities to be a problem that needed to be solved.

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<sup>301</sup> See Harold Innis, *Empire and Communications* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972).

## THE WAR OF THE AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION – KING GEORGE’S WAR, 1744-48

In many ways the War of the Austrian Succession was a series of frays removed from the riverine highway and yet the conflict’s impact on North America was considerable. The goals of its participants were diverse and not infrequently obscured by circumstance. George II aimed to protect his electorate of Hanover, to increase British influence on the continent of Europe, to aid his Hapsburg ally Maria Theresa, and to set himself apart from his father. Frederick II of Prussia expanded his kingdom by seizing the Austrian province of Silesia, built a name for himself as a military leader, and raised the possibility that Prussia might emerge as a major European power. Louis XV aimed to take advantage of the succession and to aid his ally and uncle, Philippe d’Anjou, Philip V of Spain. The alliances of Britain, the Dutch Republic, Austria and Russia on one hand, and of France, Spain, and Prussia on the other, entwined the fortunes of European nation states as never before – though yet not as pervasively as they would a decade later during the Seven Years’ War.<sup>302</sup>

Standing armies and superior navies grew rapidly during the War of the Austrian Succession.<sup>303</sup> The British Royal Navy, which enjoyed a massive advantage at the outset of the war with 124 ships of the line – outnumbering the French (with 50) and the Spanish (with only 29) by nearly two to one – was hampered by its outdated, inflexible Fighting Instructions, and did not achieve its potential for decision. The broad separation of different theatres of naval operations in the Mediterranean, the Caribbean, and the North Atlantic gave the smaller French

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<sup>302</sup>Browning, *The War of the Austrian Succession*, 20-25.

<sup>303</sup>Anderson *The War of the Austrian Succession, 1740-1748*, 21-38.

and Spanish navies the opportunity to achieve local superiority, and to produce creditable operations against the Royal Navy on the high seas.<sup>304</sup>

In North America, King George's War took very different shape. New cannon, uniforms, and muskets found their way to Louisbourg, Montreal, Boston, and Charleston but no new regular regiments were deployed to the New World. Instead provincial forces raised for individual campaigns predominated in New England, and with them older, conservative patterns of warmaking as practiced by commanders who were largely amateurs. As a result the military forces of New France and New England – the main opponents in this conflict – fought wars based on two very different principles. On the frontier the initiative and advantage remained largely with the Native allies and colonial regulars (*Troupes de La Marine*) of New France, who could launch devastating raids against exposed settlements poorly defended by provincials, supplemented by local militia formations. While these assaults did not yield decisive blows for the British or the French, they reasserted the importance of Native military might and the frontier settlers of New England perpetually on edge, creating the potential for refugee crises in regions that could not be defended apart from the blockhouses or small forts to which farm families might flee if attacked. The other war was essentially a maritime conflict, in which the New England colonies deployed the advantages of their larger population and shipping by launching privateering expeditions against French trading vessels or by using large combined forces in expeditions against French strategic strongholds such as Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island.

News of open war between Britain and France came to Albany on

13 June 1744. The Commiss<sup>rs</sup> write to the Gov<sup>r</sup> that as War is now declared between the French & English, they think it absolutely necessary that an outscout of 40 Men should be sent at the charge of the Province to the Carrying Place (a Pass between Albany and

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<sup>304</sup> Sir George Pocock Papers, Huntington Library, San Marino, California; Richard Pares, *Colonial Blockade and Neutral Rights, 1739-1763*, (Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1975), 226-239; Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession, 1740-1748*, 178-184; Browning, *The War of the Austrian Succession*, 9-11.

Crown Point) to observe the Motions of the Enemy & that a Fort or Place of Strength should be built at the said Carrying Place as a Rendezvous or retreat for our Out scouts & Partys w<sup>ch</sup> it will be necessary in War time to be continually sending out.<sup>305</sup>

This prominent mention of Ft. Lydius on the Wood Creek Portage, gives some notion of the strategic importance of Lydius's trading post, and a preliminary sense that the onset of hostilities would require a suspension of the fort's normal function as a way station in *la traite illegal*. The next day, however, even more important news arrived from the Mohawks of Caughnawaga by a courier (who undoubtedly passed by way of Wood Creek) that this might not be the case after all:

14 June. The Cacknawaga Indians of Canada send a Messenger to the Commiss<sup>rs</sup> to acquaint them, that as there is now a War declared between Great Britain & France, the said Cacknawaga Indians were Inclined to keep the Cov<sup>t</sup> of Neutrality formerly agreed on between them this Gov<sup>t</sup> & the 6 Nations & that the same friendly intercourse might be kept up between them as in time of Peace.<sup>306</sup>

The message from Caughnawaga demonstrated, at least, a public commitment to neutrality established in the Grand Settlement treaties of 1701. Some Haudenosaunee would in fact choose sides in King George's War but the League as a whole stayed out of the conflict; for Caughnawaga, nothing was more important than sustaining the movement of goods, information, and people between Albany and Montreal.

Thus King George's War on the North American borderlands saw no battles like Dettingen and Fontenoy, only the scouts and raids that the French called *petit guerre*, in which the fear of attacks proved more significant than assaults themselves. The lack of standing armies gave prominence to provincial forces in New York and New England and to *milice*, French Canadian militias, as defensive forces, but most of all it was Native warriors who held the military balance during the conflict, and the neutrality of the powerful Iroquois League helped

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<sup>305</sup> Wraxall, IA, 232.

<sup>306</sup> Ibid., 233.

ensure that, like the other two Anglo-French conflicts in the North American woodlands, this one too would end in a stalemate.<sup>307</sup>

For all their efforts to minimize its impact, however, Indians along the riverine highway suffered in King George's War by the ways in which the conflict impeded commerce and food production. When European men were off at war and Native women were trading between Albany and Montreal, crop cultivation suffered; the diversion of native warriors of the interior from hunting to raiding meant that beaver diminished as a commodity in the Albany trade. One August 1744 shipment of Albany fur to London indicated how the onset of the war shifted fur production away from beaver: its total content consisted of

16 red fox ordinary, 26 grey fox good, 2 grey fox rubbish, 39 martins, 20 mink, 36 raccoons, 10 raccoons ordinary, 1 wolf, 2 cats, 5 otter, 4 otter very ord'y [ordinary], 2 fisher, 15 middling bears, 14 musquash.<sup>308</sup>

With New York's beaver populations essentially hunted out, Albany remained dependent upon Native and French agents for pelts in the 1740s. The war pressured merchants in ways they had not seen in a generation and more, moving them to adapt the new circumstances by whatever means necessary.

For Native and European residents of North America King George's War was an urgent and personal matter, largely centering on failed harvests and the maldistribution of food and supplies, causing problems for militaries as well as civilians on all corners of the Atlantic World. Provisioning armies and navies took weeks and even then the foodstuffs were subject to spoilage or improper distribution. Malnutrition led to illness in many areas especially New England and

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<sup>307</sup> Steven C. Eames, *Rustic Warriors: Warfare and the Provincial Soldier on the New England Frontier, 1689-1748* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 87-89; Theodore Corbett, *A Clash of Cultures on the Warpath of Nations: The Colonial Wars in the Hudson-Champlain Valley* (Fleischmanns, N.Y.: Purple Mountain Press, 2002), 17.

<sup>308</sup> 27 August 1744, via the *Britannia*, John Griffiths, furs of John Bingham and John Trigg, Johannes Rutgers Bleeker Papers, 6078-04, Albany Institute of History and Art.

New France. Such shortages tested the resolve of fighting men, increased the involvement of women in the war effort, and complicated even the simplest action between French, British, or Native forces.<sup>309</sup>

Shortages complicated military campaigns but benefited smugglers who were willing to help ease the shortfalls and more efficiently distribute food and goods. Even legitimate merchants in New York, Boston, Barbados, and elsewhere found themselves drawn to smuggling in response to official embargoes that diverted Pennsylvania and New York from its usual destination in the markets of the Caribbean to buyers for the British Army and Royal Navy. Ultimately merchants and sea captains negotiated their ways around such restrictions and did manage to profit even during King George's War, though shortages remained a chief concerns for more than smugglers alone.<sup>310</sup>

Smuggling eased the burdens of shortages, sustaining French and Algonquian-speaking populations through much of a war in which trade and tactics blurred. At the onset of hostilities New York Governor George Clinton, seeking information critical to the military operations he wished to undertake conducted an interview with three noted smugglers, John Henry Lydius, Michol [Michel] Houdin, and Estion [Etienne] LaRoche, who seemed likely to be the best-informed men on topics of urgent interest to the province. Clinton began by asking Lydius general questions about the French advanced post on Lake Champlain, Fort St. Frédéric.

- 1.<sup>st</sup> Whether he thinks it likely the French Fort at Crown Point by the Lake may be taken by a proper Force sent for that purpose with Suitable Artillery.  
Answer. He thinks it may.
- 2.<sup>nd</sup>ly What number of men may be Sufficient for that purpose.  
Answer. Eight hundred or a thousand.

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<sup>309</sup> Jean Lunn, *Développement Économique de la Nouvelle France, 1713-1760* (Montreal: Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1986), 107-110; Eames, *Rustic Warriors*, 45, 96.

<sup>310</sup> Cathy Matson, *Merchants and Empire: Trading in Colonial New York* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 219-220.

- 3.<sup>rd</sup>ly Whether it will not be absolutely necessary to carry Bombs in order to the taking it.  
Answer. Yes.
- 4.<sup>th</sup>ly Whether such an Attempt will not be an effectual means of trying the French Indians fidelity respecting the Neutrality they have entered into.  
Answer. Thinks the French Indians would join the French.
- 5.<sup>th</sup>ly What forces may be probably sent from Canada to their relief in case of a suddain Expedition.  
Answer. According to the Season of the year, in Winter, 400 or 500. In Summer a 1000, having always Canoes and Snow Shoes &c. For a 1000 men in their magazines and all other necessarys for an Expedition (Except Provisions) ready at an hours warning.
- 6.<sup>th</sup>ly What Season of the year will be best to attempt it in.  
In the Winter as soon as the Ice will admit.  
How late in the year may an Army go with a prospect of returning before the Severity of the Winter Season comes in.<sup>311</sup>

Clinton then turned to more specific topics with his French informants:

#### Monsieur Houdon's Accompt of Crown Point

Monsieur Houdon says he never was at Crown Point (now called Fort St. Frederick.) But has heard at Montreal that the French design'd to make a Road to the River of St. John's for the Carrying of Provisions to Crown Point But that nothing had been done in it tho he has heard it talked of there five Years.

That Six pieces of Cannon (24 pounders, as he judges) were carried in Battoes FROM Fort Chambly to Crown Point some of which Battoes will carry 5000lb weight besides the men and their provisions.

That there are 100 men at Crown Point, 36 of which are Cadets and very young not above 15 or 16 years old. One Captain one Lieutenant and 3 or 4 Ensigns.

That there are about 14,000 Men at Montreal around about it including all Young & old because it is one of the best Settled parts of all Canada.

That Montreal is about 8 Days Journey from Crown Point and 80 Leagues from Oswego.

That Crown Point should be attacked The Difficulty to defend it would not be occasioned by the want of men but how to bring them down for want of Boats & provisions for their Support.

That it is very unusual for the Governour of Canada to Come to Montreal in the Winter, & never does but on some Extraordinary Occasion.

#### Estion LaRoche

Says that the Garrison at Crown Point were 200 men which was told him by the last Detachment that Came from Montreal to Niagara.<sup>312</sup>

<sup>311</sup> "1744, Accompts given by John Lydius, Michol Houdon & Estion LaRoche concerning Crown Point," 1. George Clinton Papers, Vol. I, 1689, March 27 – 1744, Dec., William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

<sup>312</sup> Ibid., 3.



This interview was significant for many reasons, not least of which was that Governor Clinton was considering an assault on the French Fort St. Frédéric at Crown Point or at least preparing himself should the French push south from the same position. It was curious, but not unheard of, that two Frenchmen, LaRoche and Houdon, were in Albany and conferring with the governor. Their association with Lydius disclosed their mutual ties and their links to the contraband trade. If the governor's goal in interviewing them was to gain the intelligence he needed for military purposes, the tenor of their depositions and the way in which they presented the information they offered made it clear that their principal concern was to keep open the riverine corridor.

The geography of the corridor was of consuming interest to Clinton, Lydius, LaRoche, Houdon, and indeed everyone who lived and worked along this borderland. At first glance New York and New France appeared distant: the 196 miles that separated Montreal from Albany translated into roughly two weeks of travel. On the ground, however, tensions and realities seemed much more imminent. Fort St. Frédéric was fifty miles as the crow flew from Ft. Lydius, which in turn lay only forty miles north of Albany. Lydius and other smugglers had a well-founded fear of a French attack on their properties north of Albany and prominent Albanians had real reason to consider the potential of French threats. Ft. St. Frédéric had been built not only as a defensive bulwark but a staging point for raids by French-allied Indians on British frontier settlements and stood as a reminder that the riverine highway could carry sudden death as easily as woolens and furs.<sup>313</sup>

Smuggling remained the critical factor in inhibiting the military use of the corridor during King George's War. Just as trade at neutral ports and under flags of truce kept the economies of

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<sup>313</sup> James P. Millard, *Lake Passages: A Journey Through the Centuries, Volume I, 1609-1909* (South Hero, V.T.: America's Historic Lakes, 2007), 35-37; Corbett, *Clash of Cultures*, 17.

sugar islands alive in the Caribbean during wartime, the contraband trade sustained Native and French forces in North America and helped prolong the conflict. War transformed smuggling in significant ways. Mohawk women remained relatively free to move goods, furs, and information, but many Native and European men including John Lydius and William Johnson joined the war effort. Rope, powder, and arms now accompanied shipments of strouds and beaver plews. Most officials attended to threats of attack and so paid even less heed to the smuggling that endured so long, but sporadic efforts to quell smuggling during the war made trafficking more precarious and (as the price of bribes rose) more expensive. A critical turn of events in the early summer of 1745 animated these changes; as a result smuggling and the course of the war intertwined as never before.

#### LOUISBOURG AND THE PROBLEM OF SMUGGLING

Although far removed from the riverine highway, no geographical spot in North America had more to do with smuggling along its waters than the French fortress of Louisbourg. This maritime center, so strongly fortified that it had come to be called the Gibraltar of the North, protected sea lanes linking Europe to the Caribbean and guarded the Gulf of St. Lawrence River, the doorway to New France. Since its completion in 1720 Louisbourg had been a relay station on the North Atlantic trade routes, a focal point for the Grand Banks cod fisheries, and a base for naval operations, outfitting, and repairs; in time of war these features made the city a natural staging point from which French privateers could prey on British shipping. In 1745 it therefore became a target for an Anglo-American expedition. Its seizure by New England forces, supported by a Royal Navy squadron under the command of Peter Warren, remade contraband trade along the riverine highway in significant ways.

Issues of trade and strategy directed actions in New York and New France in the first months of King George's War. In the Caribbean, matters of trade deeply influenced the action of the British Navy just as they had during the War of Jenkins' Ear. In many ways in the Caribbean it was difficult to detect the shift between the Anglo-Spanish conflict to the Anglo-French War.

By Isaac Townsend, Esq. Vice-Admiral of the Blue and Commander in Chief of his Maj<sup>'s</sup> Ships and Vessels at Barbadoes, and the Leeward Islands,

Whereas by my Order of the 30<sup>th</sup> August, You are to put his Maj<sup>'s</sup> Ship under your Command in Condition for Sea, and to Coompleat your Provisions to Four Months of all Species, as also your Water so much as You can conveniently stow, which You are to do with all the Dispatch possible, and without One Moments loss of time: And when You are ready, You are hereby required and directed to proceed to Sea and cruise to Windward of Barbadoes in the Latitude of the Said Island , for the Protection of the Trade against any Cruizers of the Enemy, or Privateers: and in case you observe there are no Cruizers or Privateers, to interrupt the Trade of this Place, you are to proceed and Cruize Twenty Leagues to Windward of the Island of Martinico, [Martinique] to interrupt, take, sink, burn, and destroy any of the Enemies Ships You may meet, or come up with, during the term of your Cruize. This Service You are to Continue on until your Water is near Expended; at which time You are to return to this Place, to revictual and repleat your Water; and to put your Ship in Condition of Service. And if You have no Orders from me contradicting the Same, You are to return on the Said Station till further Orders. Dated on Board his Majesty's Ship Dorsetshire, in Carlisle Bay, 15 September, 1745. I. Townsend To Cap.<sup>n</sup> Pocock, of his Majesty's Ship Sutherland By Command of the Admir.<sup>l</sup> V. Nevill.<sup>314</sup>

Captain Pocock's orders reveal another significant daily reality in the Caribbean. As before, British ships aim to intersect French ships not merely to interfere with the war effort but to profit navy crews keeping seamen content and obedient. Such seizures of French goods further fueled demand in Nouvelle France for English manufactures which by September 1745 came increasingly from New York City and Albany via the riverine highway. Similarly, skirmishes in New York and New France meant more to Native peoples and colonists than the distant issues of European war and dynastic succession; soon another matter would draw greater attention.

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<sup>314</sup> Isaac Townsend to George Pocock, 15 September 1745, Sir George Pocock Papers, Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

The French had constructed Louisbourg following the cession of Acadia to Britain by the Treaty of Utrecht, and that its growth in the years after 1720 had been at once a source of profit for New England merchants (who traded eagerly in the port, notwithstanding the dubious legality of such voyages), a seat of competition with New England in the cod fisheries, and an object of strategic concern as a source of discontent and continuing connection to the French empire among the Neutral French (Acadian) population of Nova Scotia. When war broke out, the occasion seemed ripe for action to such imperially-minded politicians as Governor William Shirley and his supporters in the Massachusetts General Court.<sup>315</sup>

Nova-Scotia-born Army officer John Bradstreet offered links between New England and Louisbourg providing Governor Shirley and wealthy Maine-based Massachusetts merchant William Pepperell information on trade and strategic importance of the fortress, and its vulnerability. Pepperell, a political ally of Governor William Shirley, was an early advocate of an assault on Louisbourg; when Shirley was able to rally support in the Massachusetts and Connecticut assemblies for an expedition in 1745, he named Pepperell the commander in chief of the expedition. With some difficulty Shirley also secured support from Commodore Peter Warren whose squadron was making his fortune by seizing lucrative prizes in the Caribbean, an activity they had hardly ceased since the War of Jenkins' Ear. At Shirley's request the British Admiralty eventually ordered Warren to support the New England provincial expedition with a

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<sup>315</sup> Fairfax Downey, *Louisbourg: Key to a Continent* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965), 18-19; A.J.B. Johnston, *Control and Order in French Colonial Louisbourg, 1713-1758* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2001), 205-211; John Grenier, *The Far Reaches of Empire: War in Nova Scotia, 1710-1760*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008); William G. Godfrey, *Pursuit of Profit and Preferment in Colonial North America: John Bradstreet's Quest* (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1982), 12-20; Raymond F. Baker, *A Campaign of Amateurs: The Siege of Louisbourg 1745*. 1978, Reprint Parks Canada 1995); Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession, 1740-1748*, 182-183; J.S. McLennan, *Louisbourg from its Founding to its Fall* (London: MacMillan, 1918); Browning, *The War of the Austrian Succession*, 222-223.

four-ship squadron headed by his sixty-gun flagship, the *Superbe*, which met the New England transports and Bradstreet at Canso, Nova Scotia, the rendezvous point, on April 23, 1745.<sup>316</sup>

Shirley stayed behind at Boston, and was not alone calling New England sailors and militiamen into action. On the heels of the Great Awakening many New England preachers used this war with France and the assault on Louisbourg to illustrate God's providence for Massachusetts. In Boston, Benjamin Gray artfully suggested

A Word to our Brethren going to War. Fight not for Honour or Applause, But fight for Jesus and his Laws: Behold his Ensign o'er you spread, His Banner also o'er your Head. With Faith and Prayer engage in Fight, And soon our Foes will make their Flight: No Babylonish garment seek, Nor Wedge of Gold, tho' ne'er so great. But seek the Glory of the Lord, And then Salvation he'll afford: He'll lead you out, and keep you there, From all the Dangers of the War. And prosper you in all your Ways, and give the Foes to you a Prey, 'Till with great Joy you back return, With Ensigns of the Battle won, With Pens of Iron to record, The wondrous Goodness of the Lord.<sup>317</sup>

Thus encouraged, about 4,000 New Englanders had enlisted as provincials. Undeterred by their lack of training and Pepperell's lack of experience in siege warfare, they landed at Gabarus Bay on 11 May 1745 and invested the city. Fortunately its grand battery was in disrepair and most of its artillery were aimed seaward; only comparatively few of the city's cannons defended its land side. After stoutly resisting the siege for six weeks, the governor of Cape Breton, Louis Dupont Duchambon, finally capitulated on 28 June 1745.<sup>318</sup>

Once it had fallen to British control, Louisbourg closed the gate to the St. Lawrence River, denying metropolitan French vessels access to Quebec, Montreal, and the *pays d'en haut*

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<sup>316</sup> Downey, *Louisbourg*, 66-67; W.J. Eccles, *The French in North America, 1500-1783* rev. ed. (East Lansing, Mich.: Michigan State University Press, 1998), 194-195; G.A. Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg* (Orono: University of Maine Press, 1967), Godfrey, *Pursuit of Profit*, 22-31.

<sup>317</sup> NYHS, Benjamin Gray, Boston, 1745, *Moses Pleading with God for Israel: A solemn call to all the children and servants of the Lord of Hosts, by Faith and Prayer, continued to address the Throne of Grace, for all needful Blessings to be afforded unto their Fleets and Forces, when going forth to War: And for the Church of God universal. With a word to our Brethren gone and going out on the present Expedition against Cape-Breton*, Broadside S P1745-1, Broadside in New York Collection.

<sup>318</sup> Warren and Pepperell to Duchambon, 6 May 1745, *Collection de manuscrits contenant lettres, memoires, et autres documents historiques relatives à la Nouvelle France, recueillis aux archives de la Province de Québec ou copiés à l'étranger*, 4 vols., (Québec: Demers, 1883-85), 3:220.

beyond by furnishing a secure base from which British naval vessels could cruise the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the western Atlantic off the Cape Breton shore. Both the French and British navy recognized the importance of these facts as referenced by the British Council of War in 1746.

We Your Majestys Principal Officers Commanding by Sea and Land Assembled together and having maturely taken into Consideration the several Letters and Instructions sent by the Ministry to Admiral Warren, are Unanimously of Opinion that it will be most for His Majesty's benefit that some Ships should Immediately be sent to Cruize in the Mouth of the River St. Lawrence to Endeavour to interrupt any Succours or Supplys arriving at Canada from Old France.<sup>319</sup>

Following the British seizure of Louisbourg the British quickly implemented French tactics at the post. The above passage reveals how the British Navy employed the base as a staging point for naval and privateer assaults on French shipping both commercial and military. The British also saw the base as an investment and so began rebuilding the fortifications almost immediately after seizing the post. Although Louisbourg under British control never regained the grandeur it had under the French, the important fact was that the British maintained control over the city, its lucrative commerce, and the Gulf of St. Lawrence for the remainder of the war. Many of the British occupiers, thinking that Louisbourg was now truly an outpost of New England and that Cape Breton would become a British colony at the peace, married Acadian women and prepared to remain after the war. The decision of Britain's negotiators at the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle to relinquish Louisbourg was inexplicable to them and angered New Englanders who believed they had lost the chance to create a monopoly in the North Atlantic fisheries free from harassment from French privateers and had forfeited a prime market for New England beef and grain.<sup>320</sup>

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<sup>319</sup> "Copy of a Council of war of Sea and Land Officers held at Louisbourg the 6 June 1746 about employing some of his Majesty's ships in cruising in the Gulph of St. Lawrence &ca.," Peter Warren Papers, originally in the Thomas Gage Papers, 1744-1751, Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

<sup>320</sup> Douglas Leach, *Roots of Conflict: British Armed Forces and Colonial Americans, 1677-1763* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 64-71; A.J.B. Johnston, *Endgame 1758: The Promise, the Glory, and the*

The closure of the St. Lawrence had profound effects on the New Yorkers who engaged in trade on the riverine highway, but these were not immediately felt in 1745. The seizure of Louisbourg did, however, disrupt vital lanes of communication and trade between Europe, the Caribbean, and New France.<sup>321</sup> Much of this traffic would be rerouted into the riverine highway. *Petit guerre* attacks by French-allied Indians (primarily Western Abenakis) unsettled New York frontier communities and raised fears of greater French assaults on the Hudson Valley. New York Governor George Clinton addressed such concerns in his September proclamation.

Whereas it has been credibly represented to me, that the Indians of Canada, under Pretence of a Treaty of Neutrality concluded between them and the Nations of Indians in the British Interest, have hitherto, during the present War with the French, had frequent Traffick, Intercourse and Correspondence with his Majesty's Subjects of the Country of Albany, and by their passing and repassing through our Frontiers into the Heart of the Country without Controul or Interruption, they have thereby also frequent and constant Opportunities of viewing our Situation and Actions and of conveying Intelligence to the Enemy; when at the same Time, such Indians as the French suppose to be attached to the British interest, are not suffered to travel further towards Canada, than to the Fort at Crown-Point. And Whereas it has likewise been represented, that the French Indians have lately been prevailed upon by the Governor of Canada, to take up the Hatchet against his Majesty's Subjects [their Form of a Declaration of War] and have accordingly commenced Hostilities and committed several Murders and Barbarities upon the Frontiers of New-England; which is a notorious Breach of Faith, and Violation of the Treaty of Neutrality they have speciously pretended to engage themselves in, by the Tenor whereof it was stipulated, that none of the Tribes in the British or French Interest, shou'd intermeddle in the present War between the two Crowns.

I Have therefore thought fit, by and with the Advice of his Majesty's Council, to issue this Proclamation, hereby strictly enjoining all his Majesty's Subjects within the Province, from carrying on any Kind of Traffick or Dealings, or holding any Sort of Correspondence with the Indians of Canada, or any Indians in League with the French, or attached to their Interest, and likewise forewarning and prohibiting them from harbouring, entertaining or giving any Countenance or Protection to their Persons, as they will answer the Contrary at their Peril, by incurring his Majesty's highest Displeasure and Resentment, and be prosecuted with the utmost Rigours of the LAW.<sup>322</sup>

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*Despair of Louisbourg's Last Decade* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 6-7; Allan Greer, *The People of New France* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 97-101.

<sup>321</sup> Kenneth Banks, *Chasing Empire Across the Sea: Communications and the State in the French Atlantic, 1713-1763* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 75-76; Douglas Leach, *Arms for Empire A Military History of the British Colonies in North America, 1607-1763* (New York: Macmillan, 1973).

<sup>322</sup> NYHS, New York Governor George Clinton, September 5 1745, *A Proclamation prohibited trade between New Yorkers and French and French Indians*, Broadside SY1745-2, Bristol 1302, Broadside in New York Collection.

Clinton's words were strong but his capacity to enforce them was so nearly negligible that one possible explanation for the proclamation was simply that he was hedging his bets against a post-war future in which the empire really would seek to destroy the contraband trade. Presently neither French nor British forces possessed the power or will to quell it, and with the loss of trade entering Canada through Louisbourg the profits available to New York smugglers would be great enough that any attempt to shut down the trade would simply be impossible. In publicly supporting restrictions against the Canada trade that had formally been in place for years, therefore, Clinton wisely distanced himself from the contraband trade and smugglers like Lydius who might come under fire after the war.

Governor Clinton's statement was significant for the way he addressed Natives engaged in smuggling. Clinton was no newcomer to his post, to New York, or to the riverine highway. He understood how the Haudenosaunee, and the Mohawks in particular, had been divided, at least spatially, since the late seventeenth century. He knew that the Mahicans were allied with the British and Ottawas with the French while both were Algonquian speakers. So when Governor Clinton mentioned, "that the Indians of Canada, under Pretence of a Treaty of Neutrality concluded between them and the Nations of Indians in the British Interest,"<sup>323</sup> he and his advisors recognized the emptiness of the words. In the context of the Atlantic World, however, this phrasing made sense. It permitted British subjects, especially officials, to view smuggling as a Native issue, disconnected from complex webs of commerce, corruption, and compromise. Clinton knew realities of smuggling along the riverine highway much better than that, and so did Lydius.

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<sup>323</sup>Ibid.



Lydius and his associates had great cause to suggest fortifying the Wood Creek Portage and his trading fort that watched over it, for in November of 1745 a French and Indian war party burned Lydius's post to the ground. The attack was part of a carefully planned and devastating assault on Saratoga. A month earlier Lieutenant Jacques Legardeur de St. Pierre of the *Troupes de la Marine* had been chosen to lead the force of Caughnawagas, Abenakis, Hurons, marines, and *milice* on the raid; subsequently another officer, Pierre-Paul Marin de la Malgue, recently returned from France and influential in trade and military matters, superseded him in command.<sup>324</sup> Marin de la Malgue led the party southward, taking with him both knowledge of Lydius's establishment on Wood Creek and a certain resentment for his success: Marin and his family were deeply engaged in the fur trade further west in the *pays d'en haut*, competing with some of Geneviève Massé Lydius's kin. Members of the party, both Native and French, welcomed the opportunity to return with plunder that such raids afforded, and he had no incentive to restrain them when they reached Fort Lydius.<sup>325</sup>

The French took Ft. Lydius on November 27, capturing fourteen prisoners including Lydius's son, but missing the enterprising smuggler, who at the time was safely ensconced in his Pearl Street home in Albany. The party continued to Saratoga Plantation nearly destroying it and returned to Ft. Lydius November 30 to take the prisoners whom they had left under guard. The group burned Ft. Lydius as they left and returned safely to Ft. St. Frédéric by December 3 1745.<sup>326</sup> The French and Native force lamented that their "achievement would have been much more glorious, if all the merchants of Saratoga had not left their country houses, and gone to

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<sup>324</sup> Corbett, *Clash of Cultures*, 124-126; DCBO, Peter Moogk, s.v. "Lydius, John Hendricks," Vol. IV, <http://www.biographi.ca> [accessed January 22, 2008].

<sup>325</sup> Corbett, *Clash of Cultures*, 131-134.

<sup>326</sup> Lydius rebuilt the trading house, if poorly, following King George's War. In September 1755 in the early phases of the Seven Years' War, one of his sons managed the once great post when the British Army built Ft. Edward on the remnants of Ft. Lydius. See JP, 1: 783, 861; 2: 63,66 and Corbett *Clash of Cultures*, 219-221.

spend the winter at Albany,”<sup>327</sup> but the accomplishment was great enough: the raid had struck fear in the Hudson Valley, and got the attention of Albany merchants including John Henry Lydius. To have taken, plundered, and burned his trading post had been no less a blow struck against an old foe than against the New Yorkers as a whole.<sup>328</sup>

The goals of the Caughnawagas, Abenakis, and Hurons who came with de la Malgue also mattered greatly during this raid. French-allied Native nations knew the value of the contraband trade along the riverine highway. Native allies of the French benefited from diplomatic gifts from the French brought to the Mohawk at Caughnawaga and distributed throughout New France and the *pays d'en haut*. A blow near the southern terminus of the trade corridor would be a boon for nations wishing to gain more autonomy for themselves or more leverage in their negotiations with *Onontio* as it strengthened French power along the riverine highway. And, like the French *milice* they accompanied, the Native warriors had personal grudges against traders like Lydius complete with kinship ties that made him their enemy.<sup>329</sup>

As in most of the North American battles of King George's War, Native objectives were of crucial importance. These were the people on the ground, the people who gave the French any legitimacy to their claims, the ones who strengthened British positions in New York and New England, and who transacted most of the trade along the riverine highway: they had the most to lose should the war end in decisive victory for either side. While some with Marin de la Malgue were Caughnawaga, surely the Abenakis and Hurons in the group saw this raid, and the entirety of King George's War, as opportunities to regain prominence as French allies. Iroquois

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<sup>327</sup> *Journal de la Compagne de Sarastaugue* (1745), Schuyler Papers, New York Public Library, December 3 – December 7, 1745. This official journal of De la Malgue's campaign was ultimately taken by the British during the Seven Years' War ending up in the hands of Philip Schuyler. Corbett, *Clash of Cultures*, 130-135.

<sup>328</sup> *Journal de la Compagne de Sarastaugue* (1745), Schuyler Papers, New York Public Library, November 27, 1745.

<sup>329</sup> Corbett, *Clash of Cultures*, 131-135.

neutrality made this a possibility, even if the Caughnawagas in the force served as a reminder the importance of the Iroquois in both French and British views.<sup>330</sup>

Lydius sought new directions in his pleas of protection and recovery of his trade on the riverine highway following the 1745 burning of his trading post. He anticipated correctly that King George's War would once again end in an Anglo-French stalemate. It would have to be so if the full force of the Iroquois stayed out of the conflict, which Lydius's kin and other sources assured him to be true. Lydius operated during the conflict from his Albany home, but trafficking along the corridor during the war was chancy. By 1746, he realized that Governor Clinton had ignored his pleas for support along the riverine highway so he next asked Massachusetts Governor William Shirley for help. He wrote:

Whereas your Petitioner once more overwhelm'd with Concern for His Expos'd Family Friends and Neighbours on the Frontiers Humbly pray your Excellency would Please to order that three hundred volunteers be Instantly Enlisted upon such Encouragement as the Generall Court shall please to Transport the Cannon &tc. From Albany to Wood Creek, and there Erect a Sufficient Block house for their Defence, from whence to Issue in Scouts to Annoy the French and Indian Settlements and Prevent their Incursions into our Borders; And that they be oblidg'd to keep said Said Block House so long as the Government shall please to direct as also to Lay before your Excellency a Journal of their Proceedings.<sup>331</sup>

Like many smugglers, Lydius knew the power of relationships with influential figures, and did everything he could to nurture them. He had followed this model as a young man in Albany with his neighbors the Sanderses, employed it when requickening fictive and real kinship with his father's Mohawk friends, used it when talking his way out of French prison, and used it once more with Governor Shirley. Lydius also recognized the importance of carefully phrased

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<sup>330</sup> Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 198-200; Daniel K. Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Va., 1992, 1994), 270-271.

<sup>331</sup> John Hendricks to William Shirley on attacking Block House on Wood Creek near Albany and other French positions. Contemporary copy, January 1746, \*LO55, William Shirley Papers, Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

words. The clearly interested petitioner identifies Wood Creek and his recently sacked block house the location from which the British Army should move against the French at Ft. St. Frédéric at Crown Point. Lydius realized that when they did, they would have to rebuild his post at least in part, thereby reopening and securing trade along that stretch of the riverine highway. The British would ultimately build Ft. Edward on the remains of Ft. Lydius, but not for nearly a decade until the next Anglo-French conflict would inflame the country. In the meantime King George's War complicated life in many ways along the riverine highway.<sup>332</sup>

While Lydius scrambled to shore up his investments and influence from all directions, the contraband trade in New France hummed briskly along. Some Caughnawaga Mohawks broke the promise of Iroquois neutrality by aiding in the 1745 French assault against Saratoga and Ft. Lydius. Some of their New York kin did the same siding with the British against the French. Generally, however, Mohawks avoided confrontation against each other. The business of Caughnawaga during King George's War was still very much business. Shipments to missions like that at Sault Saint-Louis arrived relatively unfettered from inspections or delays. Collusion between the Desautiers and the Jesuits at Caughnawaga had enriched both sides for decades without great contestation. During King George's War following the 1745 seizure of Louisbourg, Caughnawaga emerged as one of the few entrepôts into New France a fact that heightened its profit and vulnerability.

Trade increased so much at Sault Saint Louis during King George's War as to draw even the attention of Governor La Galissonnière. What rumor had long held streams of European and Caribbean goods now confirmed. The Desautiers' primary concern at their Caughnawaga trading house was profit, not proselytizing. Galissonnière appeared resolute against smuggling, but recognized that during the war he was powerless to stop it. Moreover, he recognized in the

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<sup>332</sup> Corbett, *Clash of Cultures*, 131-135.

Desauniers sisters a framework in place to import sorely needed prestige gifts to sustain integral relationships with the Caughnawaga Mohawks and other key Native allies. Galissionère managed to correspond with the court of Louis XV during the war despite British occupation of Louisbourg, relationships that would take the colonial governor back to France complete with a promotion at war's end.<sup>333</sup>

British success in King George's War seemed an eventuality following the capture of the fortress and yet the war dragged on. The cannons of Louisbourg now defended the harbor against French ships and the British Navy cruised Gabarus Bay. In 1746 the French had sent their main fleet under the expert direction of the Duc d'Enville<sup>334</sup> to recapture Louisbourg and most of the Atlantic coast only to lose most of the fleet at the hands of the British at Chibouctou Bay on the Nova Scotia coast. Pepperell and Warren seemed assured that victory on Cape Breton and at Chibouctou opened the way for a complete conquest of French Canada.<sup>335</sup> These ambitions never matured fully, for many reasons. Battles in Europe and the more valuable sugar islands of the Caribbean transfixed the attention, and absorbed the financial resources, of Louis XV and George II. Moreover, repairs at Louisbourg uncovered many of the problems the French had faced before the war began: cumbersome construction meant slow and costly reconstruction; food shortages scared the inhabitants; and trade proved more attractive than war.<sup>336</sup>

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<sup>333</sup> W.J. Eccles, *The French in North America*, 200.

<sup>334</sup> Jean-Baptiste-Louis-Frédéric de la Rochefoucauld de Roye, duc d'Enville one of the most successful French naval commanders plagued by British advantages and poor weather in his failed 1746 assault on the Cape Breton coast.

<sup>335</sup> James Pritchard, *Anatomy of a Naval Disaster: The 1746 French Naval Expedition to North America* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), 126-142.

<sup>336</sup> Julian Gwyn, *An Admiral for America: Sir Peter Warren, Vice Admiral of the Red, 1703-1752* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004), 99-103.

## A SOURING OF RELATIONS

For Lydius and William Johnson alike, commerce and combat intertwined in King George's War. Both men had been trusted to lead groups of Mohawks against the French in response to French assaults as the one in November 1745 that had destroyed Lydius's trading house on Wood Creek. Lydius had already alienated many of his adopted Mohawk kin through unscrupulous business dealings, but still held enough esteem among some, and a reputation amongst the British to be entrusted to such a task. Johnson's fortunes soared with those of his uncle, the hero of Louisbourg, Admiral Peter Warren. Johnson had also earned great profits for his uncle on his lands along the Mohawk Valley in both the fur trade and land speculation. Most surprisingly the two merchants entered King George's War as friends and associates, a situation that would not endure.

We know relatively little about Lydius or Johnson's deeds or orders during King George's War. In 1745 both Lydius and Johnson held New York commissions as colonel for their direction of Native scouts against the French. Johnson's title was colonel of the Six Nations Indians, a post he held until 1751.<sup>337</sup> Lydius proudly employed his title of provincial colonel for the rest of his days. Little is known about the Mohawk warriors they led. Likely these units saw little action and suffered few losses as Lydius and Johnson remained in Albany throughout most of the war, enough to transact their trade and continue shipping goods to Canada – along the riverine highway in Lydius's case, along the Mohawk-Oswego-Lake Ontario route in Johnson's. We do know that only near the very end of the war did the relationship between the two figures begin to sour. The change in the relationship between Johnson and

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<sup>337</sup> DCBO, Julian Gwyn, s.v. "Johnson, Sir William," <http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?BioId=36096> [accessed August 1, 2011]; Milton Hamilton, *Sir William Johnson: Colonial American, 1715-1763* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, National University Publications, 1976), 76-81.

Lydius discloses larger changes in attitudes towards smuggling following King George's War, a time when Lydius and Johnson chose other fields of opportunity, the Desauniers sisters endured greater scrutiny from the governor of New France, and Mohawk intermediaries possessed fewer options.<sup>338</sup>

Throughout the war Johnson and Lydius had shared trade and war objectives. Johnson's nephew Warren Johnson displayed the amity the pair and their families shared even in 1747. "My best respects to Mr. and Mrs. Lidias and all other friends."<sup>339</sup> Later that year, Johnson himself extended a similar salutation, with a puzzling addendum: "My compliments to Mrs. Lyddius &ca and tell Josett my Houses are full of French."<sup>340</sup> Josett would seem to refer to Joseph, one of Lydius' New York-born sons, who was in charge of the hasty rebuilding of Ft. Lydius near war's end, but the meaning of his final words remains obscure.<sup>341</sup> If "houses" referred to storehouses, it is possible that they were full of French pelts; if the word referred his dwelling houses at Fort Johnson and on the Warren estate, it is conceivable that he meant French people, or their language. In either case the reference offers tantalizing evidence that Johnson consorted with *habitants*, French sympathizers, and smugglers during King George's War.

From his entry into *kaniénke* in the 1730s Johnson had diversified his activities in the region. The fur trade, including the contraband Canada Trade, was only part of a larger set of

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<sup>338</sup> Gwyn, *Admiral for America*, 29; Mary Lou Lustig, *Privilege and Prerogative: New York's Provincial Elite, 1710-1776* (London: Associated University Presses, 1995), 60-61; Hamilton, *Sir William Johnson*, 54-55.

<sup>339</sup> Warren Johnson to John Henry Lydius, January 28, 1747, JP, I: 75.

<sup>340</sup> To John Henry Lydius, June 1, 1747, JP, I: 898.

<sup>341</sup> Lydius's and Geneviève's first son, Henri (born in Montreal not long before their expulsion and left behind to be cared for by the courts, friends, and family), remained in Montreal, where he was first apprenticed to Nicolas-Gaspard Boucault and later served as his father's agent. "Josett" refers to Lydius' son Joseph, one of two children who lived to adulthood following the couple's return to Albany in 1731. "Josett" later managed Ft. Lydius after it was rebuilt; his younger brother Baltus lived to be an old man after his father and brother fled to Europe in 1775 and who retained the family dwelling in Albany on Pearl Street. 20 Septembre 1735, *Engagement de Henri Lidieus (Sans), natif de Montreal; par Nicolas-Gaspard Boucault, conseiller du Roi et son procureur au siege de la Prevote et Amiraute de la ville de Quebec, a Michel Bertier, chirurgien de l'Hotel-Dieu de Quebec*, BANQ, Notaire: Henry Hiché, CN301 S135 (reel) M-173.487 – Pg 2399-2401; CAP, Stefan Bielinski, s.v. "Elm Street Corner," <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/loc/elmtreecorner.html> [accessed July 22, 2011].

business concerns that extended to sawmills, shipping, and land dealings. Initially he had needed Lydius's support and advice, but after several years of success and growing influence he was prepared to turn the tables on his onetime friend. Johnson's connections to Warren doubtless had something to do with this transformation in the relationship between the two, particularly after Warren achieved celebrity and great wealth following the capture of Louisbourg. Johnson's ascent – both locally as a speculator, trader, and Indian expert, and within the empire as the protégé of an uncle who had become both a war hero and rising political star in the House of Commons – necessarily diminished the opportunities available for a purely local operator like Lydius.<sup>342</sup>

The exchange of compliments and gifts and expressions of mutual regard continued between the men for the duration of the war, even as the distance between them began to grow. In the early summer of 1747 Johnson extended Lydius "...hearty thanks For the limes with which I have drank your Healths Severall times;"<sup>343</sup> in fall of the following year Lydius wrote to inform Johnson that "Last nite Arived Pieter Van Alen hoe [who] has brot 14 Hoxeds Rum & one Barell of Eisters [oysters] for you."<sup>344</sup> By the end of the war, however, the incompatibility of Lydius's ambitions and Johnson's had placed the two men increasingly at odds.

During King George's War Johnson's influence grew among the Mohawks along with Albany merchants and British officials. This reputation came at a price. Johnson, once deeply linked to smuggling and those who ignored colonial policy began to recognize many of the shortcomings such behavior produced. Characteristically he looked around for aid in solving problems he had been complicit in creating. In 1747, for example, he suggested that Governor Clinton intervene to solve the growing menace of Indian drunkenness:

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<sup>342</sup> Gwyn, *Admiral for America*, 121-123; Hamilton, *Sir William Johnson*, 63.

<sup>343</sup> William Johnson to John Henry Lydius, June 1, 1747, JP, I: 898.

<sup>344</sup> John H. Lydius to William Johnson, October 35, 1748, JP, I: 193.



To prevent selling any kind of liquor to any Indians in the Mohawk country or at Conojoharie; for it is impossible to do anything with them while there is such a plenty of liquor to be had all around the neighborhood, being for ever drunk. The worst of all is, one Joseph Clement who sell liquor within 20 yards of my house, & as soon as they [Mohawk warriors and scouts under Johnson's employ] get their bounty money, & that for guns, hangers, &c. they immediately go to his house & spend all there, which leaves them as poor as ratts, notwithstanding all they get from me. I have forbid him several times but in vain.<sup>345</sup>

Johnson himself had traded liquor to Indians, but Clement was a competitor, so by targeting him before the governor Johnson cast a shadow on him while leaving himself in the light. Johnson still held his position as colonel of the Six Nations but his concern was not for the welfare of Native people as much as for their ability to do the bidding of their British allies. While Johnson began complaining of traders like Clement and the costs of alliance, soon Lydius and Johnson would bicker with each other.<sup>346</sup>

Lydius complained to Colonel Johnson in 1748 that “as Nowbodi would Give the Indians anything I Lett them have 4 Blankets strouds 3 shirts 6 pr. Stokins 3 Laps 3 payers pante and an oaken Cag of Rum.”<sup>347</sup> Lydius suggested that no government official – not even Johnson – had bothered to compensate him for his expenses. As the war neared its end in 1748, the French demand for goods from the riverine highway decreased. Lydius had pinned his desire to succeed at any cost on Massachusetts Governor William Shirley, while Johnson remained true to his aunt's family the DeLanceys and his own Mohawk ties.

Only months after the two exchanged cordial greetings and drinks, Massachusetts Governor William Shirley explained, in a letter to Clinton, that he was

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<sup>345</sup> NYCD, 6: 361-362.

<sup>346</sup> Peter Mancall, *Deadly Medicine: Indians and Alcohol in Early America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 49-50, 90-92; DCBO, Gwyn, s.v. “Johnson, Sir William,” <http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?BioId=36096> [accessed August 1, 2011]; ANBO, Francis Jennings, s.v. Johnson, Sir William,” <http://www.anb.org/articles/01/01-00458.html?a=1&n=Sir%20William%20Johnson&d=10&ss=0&q=1> [accessed September 7, 2011].

<sup>347</sup> John Hendricks Lydius to William Johnson, February 13, 1748, JP, I: 132-133.

very sorry that Coll: Johnson should take umbrage at Lydius', being concerned with him in what has been done by this Govern[men]t towards cementing the Indians of the Six Nations in our interest; I would not have him imagine that myself or any part of the Govern[men]t put Lydius' service in competition with his own ... and for my own part I thought he stood extremely well with Coll: Johnson."<sup>348</sup>

Indeed Lydius had stood in good favor with Johnson, a relationship that had changed deeply; Shirley was seeing an indication of the reversal of those relations. Shirley had first approached William Johnson near the end of King George's War to serve as the Indian agent for Massachusetts as well as New York. When Johnson refused in fear of undermining ties and partnerships already in place in New York, Shirley next turned to Lydius, who had accepted, eager (as always) to advance himself without fully considering the cost.

Beginning in 1747 Lydius served as Indian agent for Massachusetts. The title concealed the real role Lydius was to play. Shirley had chosen Lydius in part out of necessity due to a rising colonial population in Massachusetts and partly for Lydius's demonstrated willingness to cheat Indians out of their land. Lydius began what would be his most lasting, and damaging, contribution to American history in the waning months of King George's War and thereafter, when he made acquisition of Native lands his new field. As in the contraband trade, laws, restrictions, morality, or loyalty to friends and family did not stand in his way towards profit in shady land dealings. Examples of Lydius's unscrupulous land acquisitions became clearer in the 1750s with the Mohawk Flats controversy, the Susquehanna Company, and the Kayaderosseras affair, but this path began in 1747 when Lydius allied his fortunes with Governor Shirley. At the time this alliance may well have seemed safe, perhaps one of the best deals Lydius ever struck,

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<sup>348</sup> William Shirley to George Clinton, Boston, August 15, 1747, *The Correspondence of William Shirley, Governor of Massachusetts and Military Commander in America, 1731-1760*, 2 vols., (Hereafter referred to as *The Correspondence of William Shirley...*), Charles Henry Lincoln, ed., (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1912), I: 394.

and yet in time it set him against Johnson and the powerful DeLancey faction, subjecting him to scrutiny he could scarcely afford.<sup>349</sup>

In Albany Lydius saw his success in the fur trade decline while William Johnson gained prominence. In 1749 Johnson suggested the name of Lydius to join the Indian commissioners at Albany, though the sincerity of the proposal is questionable, and Lydius was not appointed. Meanwhile in New France the fur trade underwent a decisive change. Merchant families in Montreal lost heavily during King George's War. Fortunes that had been built upon the fur trade by families who relied on trans-Atlantic shipment of furs rather than on *la traite illegale* for their outlet suffered greatly following the seizure of Louisbourg. The trading house at New Caughnawaga permitted the Desauniers family to control the northern terminus of the riverine highway throughout the war, and thus to weather the storm better than most. This comparative success earned them powerful enemies in Montreal, among whom were many with closer ties to French monarchy and to the government of New France.<sup>350</sup>

It is uncertain which of the Desauniers' merchant competitors led the grumbling, but by the late 1740s, powerful forces continued to join against them, especially in response to the successful Desauniers sisters of Caughnawaga. In the past the influential Pierre Trottier-Desauniers and his son were able to ward off all scrutiny of the family's illicit dealings, criticism which Governor Beauharnois had long ignored. Governor Galissonnière continued this policy of salutary neglect, but as the Desauniers' influence waned during the war in relation to their declining Atlantic shipping, more competitors spoke out against the Desauniers sisters.

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<sup>349</sup> Hamilton, *Sir William Johnson*, 298; JP, 3:423-426, 4:360; NYCD, 7: 576-577; Georgiana C. Nammack, *Fraud, Politics, and the Dispossession of Indians: The Iroquois Land Frontier in the Colonial Period* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1969), 53-69.

<sup>350</sup> DCBO, Gwyn, s.v. "Johnson, Sir William," <http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?BioId=36096> [accessed August 1, 2011]; ANBO, Jennings, s.v. Johnson, Sir William," <http://www.anb.org/articles/01/01-00458.html?a=1&n=Sir%20William%20Johnson&d=10&ss=0&q=1> [accessed September 7, 2011]; Hamilton, *Sir William Johnson*, 80.

*La traite illegale* had been a lifeline for a family whose larger concerns had suffered from the war. A contract to rebuild fortifications at Louisbourg, so evidently lucrative and promising at the beginning of the war, became a dead weight after the city's surrender, and the three-year closure of the St. Lawrence that followed annihilated the family's ability to profit by the importation of goods from France and tobacco from Martinique. By October 1747, while the Desauniers sisters grew more embroiled in their own political and commercial strife, the family's situation was desperate enough that their brother Pierre Trottier-Desauniers *fils* boarded a ship for France. His ship somehow made it past the British vessels that patrolled the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and he was able to establish himself as a merchant in Bordeaux, trading as before to the Atlantic world. He would return several times after the war to settle affairs in New France, but the focus of the family's activities had shifted to France. Desauniers *fils* had escaped complete ruin only to succeed in a different corner of the Atlantic World, and in so doing opened what would prove to be an escape route that his sisters would soon be compelled to employ.<sup>351</sup>

The way that Pierre Trottier-Desauniers *fils* resurfaced in Bordeaux reveals him and his entire family as citizens of the Atlantic World. Pierre and his sisters were all creoles of New France, yet possessed the capital and connections needed to transact a dramatic escape and reorientation of the family's enterprises. Such a path was open only to the few who had the resources and relationships to negotiate it.<sup>352</sup>

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<sup>351</sup> DCBO, José Iguarta, s.v. "Pierre Trottier Desauniers," Vol. III, <http://www.biographi.ca> [accessed January 22, 2008]; s.v. "The House of François Baril," s.v. "Pierre Trottier-Desauniers," *Roots Web*, <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=bullfrog&id=I11207> [accessed November 17, 2011]; s.v. "Descendents of Jules Trottier," <http://familytreemaker.genealogy.com/users/e/l/l/Darin-P-Ellair/GENE8-0004.html> [accessed February 8, 2012]; s.v. "Pierre Trottier-Desauniers," *Roots Web*, <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=:2526021&id=I25594> [accessed February 8, 2012].

<sup>352</sup> DCBO, José Iguarta, s.v. "Pierre Trottier Desauniers," Vol. III, <http://www.biographi.ca> [accessed January 22, 2008]; s.v. "The House of François Baril," s.v. "Pierre Trottier-Desauniers," *Roots Web*, <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=bullfrog&id=I11207> [accessed November 17, 2011].

If matters grew complicated at the Montreal terminus of the riverine highway, the Albany participants in the Canada trade faced complexities and challenges of their own. As beaver pelts from the upper Great Lakes came to move with greater comparative ease along the Mohawk Valley corridor than that of the Richelieu River-Lake Champlain-Lake George route, merchants like John Sanders at Schenectady and William Johnson gained a comparative advantage over those who lacked the ability to reorient their commerce from the older route. With the reorientation of supply routes from a North-South to an East-West axis the trading fort at Oswego on Lake Ontario gained new prominence.<sup>353</sup>

Established in 1720, Oswego had grown slowly before the war; now it opened access to fur stores in the *pays d'en haut* as never before. As one trader explained, "At this Place [Oswego], a very great Trade is carried on with the remote *Indians*, who formerly used to go down to the *French* at *Montreal*, and there buy our *English* Goods at second Hand, at above twice the Price they now pay for them at *Osneigo* [Oswego]." <sup>354</sup> Just as the observer suggested an English presence at Oswego disrupted the flow of goods, information, and furs from the *pays d'en haut* to Montreal. The Massé, Montour, and Marin families maintained ties to Detroit and Michilimackinac, but growth in this western market positioned William Johnson and John and Robert Sanders to sustain their businesses by entering directly into the Great Lakes fur trade.

King George's War thus ended the era in which the riverine highway predominated in the Canada trade. What officials and legitimate merchants had endured for decades and what smugglers had developed reached a point of vulnerability as the war changed the nature and meaning of smuggling in eastern North America. British and French opponents to smuggling

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<sup>353</sup> Thomas Elliot Norton, *The Fur Trade in Colonial New York, 1686-1776* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1974), 190.

<sup>354</sup> Cadwallader Colden, *History of the Five Indian Nations*, Part 3: 42-43, J[ames] A[lexander] Esq. to Mr. P[eter] C[ollinson], New York, 1740.

tolerated it during King George's War, but the end of the war removed valuable protections for what had been, for many, a way of life. The dawn of peace in 1748 illuminated a future for *la traite illegal* that was more uncertain than it had ever been before.

#### A POST-WAR WORLD OR AN INTER-WAR PERIOD?

Compared to the huge movements of Maurice de Saxe's troops in Europe or Admiral Anson's spectacularly profitable raiding while circumnavigation of the globe, King George's War in the Americas and the Caribbean had been characterized by sporadic fighting and – with the obvious exception of the seizure of Louisbourg – inconsequential outcomes. And yet in Saratoga, Caughnawaga, and Boston, the balance sheet of King George's War reflected a heavier toll. Combat had cooled in Europe by early 1748, but in North America *petit guerre* still alarmed French, British, and Native communities. To the plenipotentiaries from France, Britain, and the States General who ended hostilities at the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle on October 18, 1748, the War of the Austrian Succession had been an unusually complex conflict, but a comparatively conventional one in its marginal shifts to the balance of power.<sup>355</sup> Those same perceptions did not necessarily ring true when the news of peace, and its conditions, finally arrived in North America.

News of the armistice was slow in reaching British and French colonies and when it did arrive seemed to create more questions than solutions. In the first place it did not end the war: New England militiamen and provincials soldiers battled with eastern tribes off and on until October 1749 when hostilities ceased with a treaty signed at Falmouth [Maine] within Massachusetts. The colonies had enjoyed thirty years of peace prior to King George's War, which meant that the memory of how to make the transition from war to peace was weak, and

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<sup>355</sup> Browning, *The War of the Austrian Succession*, 359-362; Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession, 1740-1748*, 210-215.

the process both protracted and complicated. Most observers, however, suspected little else than another in the chain of indecisive Anglo-French wars, which is largely what they got save for some key discrepancies.<sup>356</sup>

Left to Prussia and Austria, the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle may never have been negotiated. British and French diplomats truly forged the agreement. In its wake, Prussia emerged a stronger presence in Europe than ever before under the dynamic leadership of Frederick II. The 1745 seizure of Louisbourg all but destroyed French communication with New France and British naval victories in 1746 and 1747 had weakened the French fleet.<sup>357</sup> The British East India Company's loss of its most prominent factory in India, at Madras, to the French left a more lasting reminder. The future of North America lay in the final negotiations of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. The most disturbing of these to British colonists was the return of the Channel Islands in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, including Cape Breton Island, and with it the fortress of Louisbourg recently reconstructed with British funds and British hands.<sup>358</sup>

The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle was more or less characteristic of eighteenth-century peace settlements. Minister of Marine Maurepas needed Louisbourg to sustain New France and rebuild French shipping and fisheries; to get Louisbourg back France forfeited the commercial prize of Madras and its hold on strategic positions in the Netherlands. The trade could not have been better for Thomas Pelham, the duke of Newcastle, who as Secretary of State for the North was ultimately responsible for the terms by which Britain recovered Madras, pleased its Dutch allies, and left the French fleet in sore need of repair. The deal, however, infuriated many New Englanders. Their dream of an outpost for New England on the Gulf of St. Lawrence had vanished; in the event of a new war, the New England coast would lie exposed to French

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<sup>356</sup> Eames, *Rustic Warriors*, 237.

<sup>357</sup> Pritchard, *Anatomy of a Naval Disaster*, 226-229.

<sup>358</sup> Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession, 1740-1748*, 216-219; Gwyn, *Admiral for America*, 149.

privateers and the Grand Banks fisheries would be ruined. Some New Englanders saw the move of the monarchy as disconnected from the needs of its subjects.<sup>359</sup>

Key changes occurred in the year following the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle that reverberated throughout the riverine highway and beyond. In 1749 the government of New France reorganized. La Galissonière was recalled to France and Jacques-Pierre de Taffanel, marquis de La Jonquière, became governor of New France. La Jonquière hailed from nobility but had few genuine abilities as an administrator; his inept and short-lived tenure witnessed many failures in trade, strategy, and diplomacy. He was perhaps the clumsiest, least effective of all the governors of New France.<sup>360</sup>

Marquis La Jonquière received his orders from the court of Louis XV on April 30, 1749. When he reached New France in August he faced myriad challenges of governance, many of which he inherited from La Galissonière. Others were of his own creation, stemming in large part from his resentment at being posted to New France, and from his disdain for the *habitants* whom he had been sent to govern.<sup>361</sup> In the winter of 1749 La Jonquière's predecessor, La Galissonière, had sent veteran officer, Captain Pierre-Joseph de Céloron de Blainville to make a survey of the *pays d'en haut*. Robert Cavelier de La Salle had claimed this territory and much of the American Midwest and Great Lakes Region for France in the 1682, but the French had done almost nothing to protect the region from British encroachment. George Croghan, Christopher

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<sup>359</sup> Browning, *The War of the Austrian Succession*, 360-361; Eccles, *The French in North America, 1500-1783*, 196-197; Gwyn, *Admiral for America*, 149; Downey, *Louisbourg: Key to a Continent*, 136-142; J.B. Brebner, *New England's Outpost: Acadia before the Conquest of Canada* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1965 [c1927]), 118-120.

<sup>360</sup> W.J. Eccles, *The French in North America, 1500-1783*, 199-200; Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 25-27; Richter, *Before the Revolution*, 383-385; White, *Middle Ground*, 202-203.

<sup>361</sup> Roland Lamontagne, "Témoignages de Barrin de La Galissonière sur la situation interne de l'Amérique française," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, vol. 15, no. 3, (1961): 333-343; "Mémoire du Roy pour servir d'instruction au Sr Marquis de La Jonquière, chef d'escadre des armées navales, Gouverneur et Lieutenant Général de la Nouvelle-France", Versailles, 30 avril 1749," reprinted on [http://www.archive.org/stream/cihm\\_08291/cihm\\_08291\\_djvu.txt](http://www.archive.org/stream/cihm_08291/cihm_08291_djvu.txt) [accessed February 8, 2012].



Gist, and others from Pennsylvania and Virginia infiltrated the region before and during King George's War, drawn by the demand for trade goods that the French could not adequately supply following the loss of Louisbourg. As a result, what Céloron found was not a welcome sight.<sup>362</sup>

By 1749, many villages of the Shawnees, Miamis, Delawares, and others and the pan-Indian town of Pickiwillany were full of English goods, English speakers, and pro-English sentiment. Céloron ultimately reported to La Jonquière how the English encroachment threatened the French fur trade and their control of the Ohio River leading to the Mississippi Valley. The news prompted La Jonquière to initiate a construction campaign erecting a chain of forts from the Great Lakes to the Ohio River. This act represented changes in the flow of the fur trade and the waning contraband trade along the riverine highway for growing western markets. Céloron's 1749 expedition and the forts it inspired put in place obstacles and tensions that the British and French would soon be unable to ignore.<sup>363</sup>

La Jonquière also took initiatives regarding smuggling along the riverine highway that proved highly significant for the story of contraband trade. La Galissonnière had left a record of the ways in which Marie-Anne, Marie-Madeleine, and Marguerite Desauniers had avoided prosecution for decades. The powerful father had died in 1736 and their influential brother had relocated to Bordeaux. Lacking the legal and social connections that had long kept their path clear the Desauniers sisters became vulnerable to competitors just as Lydius had been unto them in 1730. During the summer of 1749 La Jonquière launched a series of proceedings that ultimately resulted in the Desauniers' expulsion less than two years later.<sup>364</sup>

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<sup>362</sup>Eccles, *The French in North America*, 95-99.

<sup>363</sup>White, *Middle Ground*, 202-203, Eccles, *The French in North America*, 199-200.

<sup>364</sup>LAC, "Paroles des chefs du Sault-Saint-Louis à La Jonquière, 1750, juin 2," Fonds des Colonies, Series C11A, Correspondence générale: Canada, Call Number: MG1-C11A, Microfilm of the Original, reel no. F-95, Textual Records, Original Volume 95, fol. 187-189v, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca> [accessed April 1, 2008].

In many ways post-war North America looked bleak. It would not improve once bystanders realized this would be the briefest pause between Anglo-French wars to date. New England had captured, then lost, Louisbourg. The French had a fleet left to rebuild, final repairs to make at Louisbourg, and a score of new forts to construct. Iroquois towns from the St. Lawrence to the Mohawk Valley had suffered from crop failures. Abenakis, Hurons, Ottawas, Potawatomis, and other French-allied nations had lost warriors in scouting and raiding against the British. Most felt abandoned by their French father Onontio whose inability to distribute gifts between 1745 and 1748 had led many to turn to English traders at Pickawillany and elsewhere in the *pays d'en haut*. Marie-Anne, Marie-Madeleine, and Marguerite Desauniers, like many smugglers, once able to exploit the weaknesses between French and British empires, now saw themselves in imminent danger of being crushed between them.<sup>365</sup>

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<sup>365</sup> White, *The Middle Ground*, 198-200; Eccles, *The French in North America*, 198-199.

## CHAPTER V

### EXPENDABLE SMUGGLERS, 1750-1754

#### INTRODUCTION

“Colonel Lydius resided here till the beginning of the last war, chiefly with a view of carrying on a greater trade with the French Indians; but during the war, they burnt his house and took his son prisoner. The fort was situated on a plain, but at present the place is all overgrown with a thicket.”<sup>366</sup> Pehr Kalm’s description of the ruin of Fort Lydius, written in June of 1750 as the Swedish botanist traveled north from Albany to Montreal, offers a picture of how King George’s War had altered smuggling along the riverine highway. Lydius never fully recovered from the 1745 raid on his fur post; nor did the French ever fully recover from the famine of trade goods that had afflicted New France following the capture of Louisbourg. That seizure made illicit trade both more difficult and more profitable but it also greatly hindered the ability of government of New France to distribute gifts to allied Native nations. Traffic along the riverine highway remained slow following the war. It did not, however, halt altogether. Greater trade at Fort Niagara, Fort Oswego, and Fort Frontenac signaled realities that Montreal and Albany had long ignored; more furs now came from the Great Lakes and trade patterns reflected this more and more.

Fewer canoes passed by the Wood Creek Portage in 1750 than a decade before in part because the war gave bureaucrats and rival merchants in Montreal the opportunity and motive to remove the Desautiers sisters from their prominent position along the trade corridor. This development had a mixed impact on the *gantowisas* and Mohawk traders and porters, some of whom actually gained more opportunities in trade as some smugglers felt imperial pressure and

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<sup>366</sup> Pehr Kalm, *Travels in North America*, The English Version of 1770, ed. and trans., Adolph Benson, Vols. I-II (New York: Wilson-Erickson Inc., 1937), 361.

others escaped it. In Albany the changed conditions of the early 1750s moved J. H. Lydius to seek profits less in trade than in new efforts to induce New York's Indians to cede lands to colonial speculators and governments. These changes remade life along the riverine highway.

### THE EXPULSION OF THE DESAUNIERS SISTERS

Changes following King George's War sounded the death knell for the Desauniers' operation at Sault-Saint-Louis but did not ultimately defeat these indomitable merchant women. In 1750 the marquis de La Jonquière, having taken office the year before as governor-general, declared the Desauniers and Père Jean-Baptiste Tournois guilty of trading with the English through the Iroquois at Caughnawaga. La Jonquière explained that "Despite warnings these women continued to employ several Indians to trade and transport illicit furs and goods, the Iroquois took the beaver they trapped to the English at Chouaguen [Oswego] and Orange [Albany] and on the same trip brought back prohibited English trade goods to the Desauniers' store...."<sup>367</sup> Pierre Desauniers *fils*, in Bordeaux, could not intervene to protect his sisters.

Governor La Jonquière confirmed what knowledgeable traders and law officers in New France had known since the 1720s. The Jesuit mission at New Caughnawaga revolved more around trade and Mohawk military support for New France than about any compassionate Christian mission and the Desauniers sisters remained at the heart of this corruption. When the return of Louisbourg to French control by Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle removed the necessity of

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<sup>367</sup> LAC, Copie de l'ordre de La Jonquière adressé aux demoiselles Desauniers - souligne qu'elles pratiquent la contrebande avec les Anglais d'Orange, 1750, mai 29, Montreal, Fonds des Colonies, Series C11A, Correspondence générale: Canada, Call Number: MG1-C11A, Microfilm of the Original, reel no. F-95, Microfilm of the transcript, reel no. C-2398, Textual Records, Original Volume 95, fol. 180-180v, Transcript Vol. 95, p. 155-156, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca> [accessed April 1, 2008].

importing strategically indispensable trade goods and arms via the Mohawk corridor, the Desauniers sisters became expendable.<sup>368</sup>

Caughnawaga was in a sensitive position. The headmen at the St. Lawrence settlement, who had much to lose if they alienated government officials, found it expedient to side with La Jonquière against the Desauniers. The recognition that both the political and economic changes had come with the return of peace lay behind the war captain Teganagouse's acknowledgement, in May 1750, that "they [Desauniers] had dealt with Indians for the furs from their hunts which were then sent to Orange and to Chouaguen [Oswego] by the same Indians who then returned carrying English merchandise."<sup>369</sup> His words came not as an epiphany but as verification of what La Jonquière knew to be true; the way in which Teganagouse spoke, however, implicated the Desauniers under government scrutiny while leaving Caughnawaga Mohawks in the clear. La Jonquière knew better, of course; he also knew better than to try to make an issue of it.

A month later, the Caughnawaga headman Tegariogouin implicated the Jesuit accomplices to the Desauniers illicit trading. "The whole village regrets their illegal dealings; it is generally believed that the Jesuits had an interest in the Demoiselles Desauniers' business."<sup>370</sup> Once again the negotiations reflected the Natives' desire to please colonial administrators while ensuring that they turned a blind eye towards the activities of Mohawk traders and porters. It seems that Teganagouse and Tegariogouin made these statements while negotiating the bestowal of chiefs' medals on themselves and gifts of trade goods they could distribute among the people of Sault-Saint-Louis. Severing kinship ties by furnishing testimony that they knew would lead to

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<sup>368</sup> Fairfax Downey, *Louisbourg: Key to a Continent* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965), 140-143; A.J.B. Johnston, *Control and Order in French Colonial Louisbourg, 1713-1758* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2001), 28-29.

<sup>369</sup> LAC, Paroles de Teganagouassen et Beauvais chefs de guerre du Sault-Saint-Louis à La Jonquière, 1750, mai 15, Fonds des Colonies, Series C11A, Correspondence générale: Canada, Call Number: MG1-C11A, Microfilm of the Original, reel no. F-95, Microfilm of the Transcript, reel no. C-2398, Original Volume 95, fol. 174-175, Transcript Volume 95, p. 145-147, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca> [accessed April 1, 2008].

<sup>370</sup> Ibid.

the Desauniers' expulsion was doubtless difficult, but saving face for themselves and preserving good relations with *Onontio* took precedence. Their allegations yielded results. At the end of May 1750, the sisters left their post at New Caughnawaga, supposedly to retire. Instead they continued to trade from Montreal and elsewhere, expecting once again to avoid scrutiny.<sup>371</sup>

The demoiselles Desauniers had eluded, bribed, or cajoled their way out of trouble with the French government before, but in the winter of 1751 they failed. In March of that year, the sisters petitioned the directors of the *Compagnie des Indes* and syndics of the Montreal merchants, of whom their brother was once head, asking pardon for their offenses. In the letter they explained that Governor-General La Jonquière had expelled them for trading furs illegally to the English from Sault-Saint-Louis. The governor had legitimate cause to expel the sisters, but these proceedings reveal that commercial and political motivation likely urged La Jonquière's actions. La Jonquière and influential merchants jealously resented the Desauniers sisters' success trading in both furs and the lucrative ginseng root.<sup>372</sup> It is not clear which individuals testified against the sisters, but among the merchants who stood to profit from the expulsion of the Desauniers sisters were the prominent Pierre Guy, who had heavily invested in trade with the Céloron family, Alexis Monière, who had links to the Marin de La Malgue family, and others similarly entrenched in *la traite illégale*. Company officials ignored the sisters' pleas.<sup>373</sup>

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<sup>371</sup> LAC, Copie de l'ordre de La Jonquière adressé aux demoiselles Desauniers - souligne qu'elles pratiquent la contrebande avec les Anglais d'Orange, 1750, mai 29, Montreal, Fonds des Colonies, Series C11A, Correspondence générale: Canada, Call Number: MG1-C11A, Microfilm of the Original, reel no. F-95, Microfilm of the transcript, reel no. C-2398, Textual Records, Original Volume 95, fol. 180-180v, Transcript Vol. 95, p. 155-156, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca> [accessed April 1, 2008].

<sup>372</sup> LAC, Requête des demoiselles Desauniers adressée aux syndics et directeurs de la Compagnie des Indes, mars 1751, Montreal, Fonds des Colonies, Series C11A, Correspondence générale: Canada, Call Number: MG1-C11A, Microfilm of the Original, reel no. F-97, Microfilm of the transcript, reel no. C-2399, Textual Records, Original Volume 97, fol. 380-381, Transcript Vol. 97, p. 282-283, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca> [accessed April 1, 2008].

<sup>373</sup> Theodore Corbett, *A Clash of Cultures on the Warpath of Nations: The Colonial Wars in the Hudson-Champlain Valley* (Fleischmanns, N.Y.: Purple Mountain Press, 2002), 125-126; Peter Moogk, *La Nouvelle France: The Making of French Canada, A Cultural History* (East Lansing, Mich.: Michigan State University Press, 2000), 191;

The Governor-General acted on the combined evidence against the Desauniers sisters and the Jesuit fathers at Sault-Saint-Louis to expel the Desauniers sisters and Father Tournois from New Caughnawaga and New France. In May 1751, Tournois and the three sisters (Marie-Anne, Marie-Madeleine, and Marguerite and their families) boarded the *Chariot Royale* for Bordeaux. La Jonquière's decision to crush Tournois and the Desauniers was clearly intended to signal smugglers that the contraband trade had outlived its wartime utility and would no longer be tolerated by the French government.<sup>374</sup>

For Tournois and the Jesuits, La Jonquière's act was indeed crushing. Father Tournois spent the rest of his years in France and Belgium, wandering from Cambrai to Valenciennes to Orchies, pining for Sault-Saint-Louis. The Jesuit Order similarly suffered suspicion and distrust for their participation in the illicit trade and their cooperation with the Desauniers. No one in New France expressed regret during the balance of La Jonquière's administration; it was not until Ange Duquesne de Meneville, marquis de Duquesne, arrived to assume the office of Governor-General and lamented that "Never was there a greater necessity to send back Father Tournois to this colony"<sup>375</sup> that anyone in office regretted the loss of his knowledge of Mohawk culture, or sensed that it might be of use in next Anglo-French conflict.

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Suzanne Gousse, "Les couturières en Nouvelle-France. Leur contribution socioéconomique à une société coloniale d'Ancien Régime" (Master's Thesis, University of Montreal, 2009), 104.

<sup>374</sup> E.P. Hamilton, "Unrest at Caughnawaga, or, the Lady Fur Traders of Sault St. Louis," *Fort Ticonderoga Museum Bulletin* 11.3 (1963), 160; Donald E. Pusch, *Logs of the Chariot Royale, 1752-53: A Detailed Account of the Chariot Royale's Louisiana Campaign as Recorded in the Ship's Logs* (Seabrook, T.X.: Le Petite Presse de Lac, 2010), 18. This account explains how the *Chariot Royale* was a true ship in the Atlantic World making routine stops at all corners of French influence. It is likely that the Desauniers sisters even transacted business on their way to their intended expulsion. DCBO, Jean-Marie Le Blanc, s.v. "Jean-Baptiste Tournois," Vol. III, (Toronto, Paris: University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2000), <http://www.biographi.ca> [accessed January 22, 2008].

<sup>375</sup> M. Duquesne to M. Machault, Quebec, 31 September 1754, NYCD, X: 267.

If Tournois's disgrace set an example of the risks that could attend smuggling, the exile of the resilient Desauniers sisters proved less grim.<sup>376</sup> The clearest view of the Desauniers' 1751 expulsion comes from the journal Élisabeth Bégon, wife of the intendant of New France, Michel Bégon, and once a close confidante of the *demoiselles* Desauniers. Madame Bégon's extraordinary journal chronicled administrative affairs, noted trade fluctuations, and detailed the gossip of eighteenth-century Montreal. On February 4, 1751 she reported that "The Demoiselles Desaunier have come to set up shop in La Rochelle, having already been expelled from the Sault [Sault-Saint-Louis/ New Caughnawaga] just as their brother Dufy [Thomas-Ignace Trottier Dufy Desauniers]." <sup>377</sup> Later that month Madame Bégon noted that "the sisters had taken refuge in La Rochelle after being chased from the Sault [Sault-Saint-Louis]." <sup>378</sup> Their commercial success and social notoriety ended in a disgraceful deportation from Montreal and New France, but not in defeat. <sup>379</sup>

The *Chariot Royale*, conveniently enough, deposited the Desauniers in the port city that was home to their brother, Pierre. He was presumably instrumental in helping his sisters relocate to La Rochelle, and to establish a new trading company almost immediately thereafter. La Rochelle was one of the most prominent ports dealing in furs and goods from New France and shipping European manufactures to the Americas. There Pierre Trottier-Desauniers had first re-established himself in France in 1747, and his connections no doubt aided them upon their arrival

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<sup>376</sup> DCBO, Jean-Marie Le Blanc, s.v. "Jean-Baptiste Tournois," Vol. III, (Toronto, Paris: University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2000), <http://www.biographi.ca> [accessed January 22, 2008].

<sup>377</sup> Élisabeth Bégon, Journal Entry 4 février 1751, PISTARD, Centre: Quebec, Cote: P2,P393, <http://pistard.banq.qc.ca> [accessed March 24, 2008].

<sup>378</sup> Élisabeth Bégon Journal Entry 19 février 1751, PISTARD, Centre: Quebec, Cote: P2, P396, <http://pistard.banq.qc.ca> [accessed March 24, 2008].

<sup>379</sup> Pusch, *Logs of the Chariot Royale*, 18.



in 1751. Once again family connections enabled the Desauniers to snatch success from the jaws of defeat.<sup>380</sup>

Like Lydius in the 1730 deportation that the Desauniers family had done so much to orchestrate, the 1751 expulsion of the Desauniers sisters illustrated key features of illicit trade in North America. First, even when a smuggler could influence the government to expel, fine, or imprison a competitor, such power could not immunize that individual from suffering a similar fate later on. Secondly, immediately before and after times of war, when smuggling came into clearest view, smugglers attained both notoriety and vulnerability.<sup>381</sup> Like their indomitable counterpart Lydius, Marie-Anne, Marie-Madeleine, and Marguerite Desauniers could never be completely defeated in their deft navigation of trade in the Atlantic World, benefitting from, but never paying in full the price of empire.<sup>382</sup>

### OPPORTUNITY FOR GANTOWISAS

At first glance it would seem that the Desauniers' departure signaled an end of smuggling along the riverine highway between Albany and Montreal, but in fact the trade reorganized itself

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<sup>380</sup> DCBO, José Iguarta, s.v. "Pierre Trottier Desauniers," Vol. III, <http://www.biographi.ca> [accessed January 22, 2008]; s.v. "The House of François Baril," s.v. "Pierre Trottier-Desauniers," *Roots Web*, <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=bullfrog&id=I11207> [accessed November 17, 2011]; s.v. "Descendents of Jules Trottier," <http://familytreemaker.genealogy.com/users/e/l/l/Darin-P-Ellair/GENE8-0004.html> [accessed February 8, 2012]; s.v. "Pierre Trottier-Desauniers," *Roots Web*, <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=:2526021&id=I25594> [accessed February 8, 2012]. *Lettres au Cher Fils: Correspondence d'Élisabeth Bégon avec son gendre* (1748-1753) ed., Nicole Deschamps (Québec: Boréal, 1994), 27-28.

<sup>381</sup> Marguerite Desauniers moved to France with her sisters in 1751 along with husband Joseph Dufy Charest, and five children went to France. He left her a widow in 1763, when she married Charles Josué Eury de La Pérelle 12 august 1764. That same year the couple sailed for the new French colony Guyane (French Guiana) on the Caribbean coast of South America. Marguerite left Marie-Anne, and Marie-Magdeleine to trade in La Rochelle but established her own enterprises with her husband La Pérelle demonstrating even more fluidity and mobility for select elites within the Atlantic World than previously thought.

<sup>382</sup> Robert Larin, *Canadiens en Guyane, 1754-1805*, (Paris: Press Paris Sorbonne, 2006), 200-201; *Lettres au Cher Fils: Correspondence d'Élisabeth Bégon avec son gendre* (1748-1753) ed., Nicole Deschamps (Québec: Boréal, 1994), 27-28; BANQ, 14 octobre 1788 – Notoriété des défunctes [Marie-] Madeleine Desauniers, Notaire: Louis Chaboillez (Montreal) CN601.S74 (reel) M-620.1182 (3291) Pg 1219-1223.

in the early 1750s with the Desauniers sisters in France and Lydius engaging in other endeavors, the trade did not stop. Mohawk men and women continued to profit by exchanging English manufactures for the furs of New France in the years following King George's War and preceding the outbreak of the Seven Years' War. As before, these Haudenosaunee individuals were not only porters, but traders, intermediaries, and diplomats. At a time when Native alliance with the French held in the balance, the actions and attitudes of such Native figures mattered more than ever from *kanienke* to Montreal, and from Albany to Paris.

This story of inter-imperial trade always belonged to Native peoples and a surprising number of women, even when European accounts limit true appreciation of their actions or the meanings they produced. Trade, communication, and mobility still lay in Haudenosaunee women's hands in 1752. As one contemporary Seneca explains,

[Haudenosaunee women were] put in direct contact with the market, putting [them] in a position for trade, not just transport. They [saw] opportunity for trade and took advantage of that situation. Women became involved due to their tendency not to drink [alcohol] before or during trade. Rum was being used prolifically by men.<sup>383</sup>

Haudenosaunee women were, and are, regarded as trustworthy and centrally important in decisions concerning, family, clan, and nation. This authority was especially important in the 1750s when French, Dutch, and English influences infringed on traditional Haudenosaunee culture.

Pehr Kalm's description of the riverine highway in 1750 omitted mention of Haudenosaunee women; the story told from their perspective differed. As one contemporary Mohawk explains, "In matrilineal society besides profit trade offered an exciting trip – more than the drudgery of the village. These women traders were not clan mothers. They [clan mothers]

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<sup>383</sup> Peter Jemison, Seneca Nation, Interview by author, Ganondagan New York State Historic Site, Victor, New York, June 29, 2011. Peter is the director of Ganondagan New York State Historic Site and a descendent of Iroquois adoptee Mary Jemison.

were too busy.”<sup>384</sup> *Gantowisas* and their trading sisters were very busy in the 1750s. The contraband Canada or Albany trade thrived in the 1750s, though the absence of its the former mainstays Lydius and the Desauniers left more room for the Haudenosaunee figures who made possible the trade all along. The journals of Robert and John Sanders offer the best views of Haudenosaunee traders in the post-war years.

Like many prominent businessmen in Albany the Sanders brothers were trans-Atlantic merchants. And in the age of sail these brothers maintained detailed records of their transactions in letterbooks, daybooks, and trade ledgers. Like some family firms, each brother kept his own records while sharing documents as needed. The joint letterbook that the brothers kept from 1742-44 showed a record of successful, if unremarkable and generally legal activity, as (for example) the letter of December 8, 1742 showing that the brothers had shipped goods, ginseng root, and furs to Barbados and St. Christopher on their cousin Lawrence Van der Spiegel’s ship. Most entries, like the one of December 28, 1742 in which the pair sold a hogshead containing 173 Beaver for £300 and 81 Deer Skins for £177, regarded shipment and sale of furs to the London firm of Storke and Champion, the one favored by most Albany merchants as a clearinghouse for North American peltries.<sup>385</sup> Accounts describe linen and gingham coming from London and the amounts and types of furs they shipped out.<sup>386</sup>

The letterbook that Robert Sanders opened a decade later, however, contrasted sharply with the humdrum quality of this earlier record. From 1752 to 1758, Sanders kept a letterbook separate from his other affairs. Unlike the other invaluable source documenting the workings of

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<sup>384</sup> John Fadden, Mohawk Nation, Interview by author, Six Nations Indian Museum, Onchiota, New York, June 24, 2011. John and his family run the museum that John’s father Ray founded in 1954.

<sup>385</sup> NYHS, Sanders Family Papers, John and Robert Sanders, *Letterbook, 1742-43*, Misc. Microfilms, Reel No. 3.

<sup>386</sup> NYHS, Sanders Family Papers, John Sanders, *Letterbook of John Sanders, Schenectady, New York, 1749-1773*. This letterbook is nearly completely in Dutch, but does include many invoices of goods sent or received to and from Storke and Champion of London, the types of furs shipped and goods received from woolens to pewterware. For shifting trade patterns in the 1750s see also Cathy Matson, *Merchants and Empire: Trading in Colonial New York* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 209.

*la traite illégale*, Catherine Dagneau's Montreal Journal of 1729, Sanders's letterbook was not to document the activities of competitors in the act of smuggling, but rather to keep track of his own illicit dealings.<sup>387</sup> Sanders was acutely aware of the risk of prosecution, for the merchant's political stock was on the rise. In 1750 he had been appointed mayor of Albany. Therefore, like all politicians, Sanders needed keep his other business documents free of suspicious transactions.<sup>388</sup> Scholars have referenced Robert Sanders's secret journal, but none has yet examined it fully.<sup>389</sup>

Robert Sanders's letterbook reveals several important details about the Albany trade in the 1750s. The brothers recorded their legitimate transactions in other documents in English or Dutch.<sup>390</sup> Much of Robert Sanders's 1752-58 letterbook was kept in French, especially portions dealing with contraband merchandise or furs.<sup>391</sup> Other Albany traders occasionally wrote business correspondence in French, but the extent of Sanders's use of the language is extraordinary, and clearly signifies his connection to the illicit Canada trade. Even more telling, however, is that although Sanders is always identified as the sender or recipient of the letters, manifests, or invoices in the volume, the names of his clients are never disclosed. Keeping his associates' names a mystery would have saved him from prosecution had any of his other stratagems failed. Sanders's efforts to project an innocent and industrious public appearance

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<sup>387</sup> NYHS, Sanders Family Papers, Robert Sanders, *Robert Sanders Letterbook*, Albany, 1752-58, [Microfilm and original], Misc. Microfilms REEL 3. All translations from the original French are by author.

<sup>388</sup> CAP, Stefan Bielinski, s.v. "Sanders, Robert," <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/bios/s/rosanders1443.html> [accessed August 15, 2011]; David Armour, *Merchants of Albany New York, 1686-1760*. New York: Garland, 1986), 266-267.

<sup>389</sup> Gerald R. (Taiaiake) Alfred, *Heeding the Voices of Our Ancestors: Kahnawake Mohawk Politics and the Rise of Native Nationalism* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1995), 44-46; Jean Lunn, "The Illegal Fur Trade Out of New France, 1713-1760," *Report of the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Society* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1939): 61-76; Jan Grabowski, "Les Amérindiens domiciles et la 'contrebande' des fourrures en Nouvelle-France," *Recherches Amérindiennes au Québec* 24.3 (1994): 45-52.

<sup>390</sup> NYHS, Sanders Family Papers, John and Robert Sanders, *Letterbook, 1742-43*, Misc. Microfilms, Reel No. 3; NYHS, Sanders Family Papers, John Sanders, *Letterbook of John Sanders, Schenectady, New York, 1749-1773*.

<sup>391</sup> NYHS, Sanders Family Papers, Robert Sanders, *Robert Sanders Letterbook*, Albany, 1752-58, [Microfilm and original], Misc. Microfilms REEL 3.

paid off; it was only long after his death that the extent of his involvement with the contraband trade became known.

In place of his associates' names, Sanders employed a complicated code that kept his partners anonymous. Most entries began with the title "Monsieur" or "Mons.," but after that the document deviates from the norm. In place of a surname most correspondents are assigned a roman numeral "Mons. XII," "Mons. IIII," or "Mons. IIII."<sup>392</sup> Drawings identified other correspondents, such as a smoldering pipe or bird.<sup>393</sup> And in other cases, unique drawings, possibly a stylized initial identified associates, as with "Monsieur DND" or "Monsieur PMP."<sup>394</sup>

Fully deciphering this code may never be possible yet contextual clues reveal a great deal that may easily be overlooked at first glance. Letters addressed to DND and PMP offer us the more tantalizing details about with whom Sanders traded. In the letter to DND, August 11, 1752, Sanders reported that "Madam Mase Lydius [Geneviève Massé Lydius] has well received the *Capot* [a French hooded blanket coat] she is much obliged of the generosity that you have given and sends by the present porter a pair of wood [*sic*] for Madame, your wife. My wife prays you will accept it."<sup>395</sup> This entry reveals that Monsieur DND is someone familiar to the Lydius family, likely a friend or relative handling their affairs in Montreal.

In the case of Monsieur PMP, Sanders faltered in adhering to his code by referring in the citation to "Monsieur PMP, or Monier."<sup>396</sup> Here Sanders directly identified one of the most prominent of merchants in Montreal, Alexis Lemoine, *dit* Monière. Like Sanders, Monière was

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<sup>392</sup> Ibid., "Mons. IIII, Albany the 30<sup>th</sup> of January 1753," "Mess. IIII and XII, Albany the 5<sup>th</sup> of May 1753," "Monsieur III, Albany the 16<sup>th</sup> of May 1753." In the case of Monsieur XII a drawing of a smoldering pipe always accompanies the numeral.

<sup>393</sup> Ibid., "Mons. XII [smoldering pipe], Albany the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 1753," "Mons. [Drawing of Bird, some have speculated this to be a quail], Albany the 16<sup>th</sup> of May 1753."

<sup>394</sup> Ibid., "Mons. DND, Albany, 11<sup>th</sup> of August 1752," "Monsieur PMP or Monier, Albany the 19<sup>th</sup> of October 1752."

<sup>395</sup> Ibid., "Mons. DND, Albany, 11<sup>th</sup> of August 1752." It is as of yet unclear as to what is "*un pair de bois*."

<sup>396</sup> Ibid., "Monsieur PMP or Monier, Albany the 19<sup>th</sup> of October 1752."

powerful enough to engage in some degree of smuggling without losing credibility or standing in New France. Robert Sanders entries offer much more detail.

In 1752 and 1753 many of Sanders' clients were French women. Like the dynamic Desauniers sisters, Madame LDM and Madame Dasmurseaux transacted business directly, on their own behalf, with Sanders, and perhaps with other Albany merchants. These women were likely widows like Catherine Dagneau who inherited their deceased husbands' businesses. Madame LDM and Madame Dasmurseaux exemplified how, even after the Desauniers sisters had been banished to France, enterprising women flourished along the riverine highway. Much more telling is how Haudenosaunee traders, many of them women, leap from Sanders's pages.<sup>397</sup>

Almost every entry in Robert Sanders's letterbook of the 1750s gives name and face to the Haudenosaunee who plied the waters and trails between Montreal and Albany. Most are only generally identified, yet these descriptions do two important things. Haudenosaunee men and women are transformed from vague figures who carried furs and goods to individuals who made choices as to what routes to use, what goods to demand, or what price to negotiate. Sanders identifies all Mohawks here as porters. It is clear, however, that many of them were go-betweens or even *petits-marchands*. Sanders describes the activities of these Mohawk men and women to a degree that suggests that they were not novices at the trade in 1752, but veterans who had plied *la traite illégale* for years, or perhaps decades. The journal is then useful for considering Native contributions and activities in the trade in earlier years as well.<sup>398</sup>

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<sup>397</sup> Ibid., "Porteur from Madame Demeurseaux, 10, September, 1753," and "Porter from Madame LDM, 11, September 1753."

<sup>398</sup> Theodore Corbett, *A Clash of Cultures on the Warpath of Nations: The Colonial Wars in the Hudson-Champlain Valley* (Fleischmanns, N.Y.: Purple Mountain Press, 2002), 120-121.

Dozens of entries unveil a cast of Haudenosaunee characters who travelled between Albany and Montreal for Robert Sanders including: Marie-Magdelaine - *sauvagesse*,<sup>399</sup> Joseph Harris – Native of British extraction, *sauvage*<sup>400</sup> Jacques, *Sauvagesse* Agnesse (sometimes Aniesse), Caragroux, Conquasse (also Ganaquasse), Gaingoton, and Tiogenra (also Togainra and Togaira).<sup>401</sup> Of this roll call several general observations bear noting. Just as in Dagneau's 1729 Montreal journal, the Native traders used either Gallicized names like Jacques or Agnesse or trade names like Gaingoton meaning "something upright" or Caragroux "something white." These names reveal the significance of Mohawk people in this story of borderland trade.<sup>402</sup>

Just as Catherine Dagneau's journal brought into clear relief the nature of illicit trade in 1729-30, Sanders's correspondence detailed the state of affairs in 1752-53. It was not a handful of Native porters, but dozens who appeared in Sanders's accounts, perhaps indicating an increase in the activity of Haudenosaunee people in the aftermath of the Desautiers' expulsion. One of the most detailed descriptions of a Native participant comes in Robert Sanders's 1752 letter to Monsieur PMP or Monier.

It is coming on the tenth day since I prepared and sent you 1 Baril of good oysters by 1 *Sauvagesse* who calls herself Mari Magd [Marie-Magdeleine] who explained to me that she knows you perfectly well, I hope that this has arrived well-received since I already received your very obliging letter of 19 Sept by the porter of the present Gaingoton, Sauvage Du Saut...<sup>403</sup>

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<sup>399</sup> In these cases the period term *sauvagesse* simply means Native maiden or young Indian woman.

<sup>400</sup> Here, *sauvage* is the eighteenth-century term for Native American or a member of a First Nation.

<sup>401</sup> NYHS, *Robert Sanders Letterbook, Albany, 1752-58*.

<sup>402</sup> Bill Loran, Mohawk Nation, Interview by author, Kanatsiohereke Mohawk Community, New York [Near Fonda, New York], (Conducted during the Kanatsiohereke Strawberry Festival organized by Thomas Porter) June 25, 2011. Loran is one of few Haudenosaunee elders today who endured Indian boarding school and retained much of his Native language. The true meaning of Gaingoton "something upright" remains unclear. It seems most likely that this man was tall, but could have referred to his character or stature. In the case of the name Caragroux, "cara" means white, but the suffix "oux" suggests a French addition, possibly due to this Caughnawaga Mohawk's Catholic faith. The meaning of the French ending likely added additional significant context to this trade name for people who spoke both Mohawk and French.

<sup>403</sup> NYHS, *Robert Sanders Letterbook, Albany, 1752-58*, "Monsieur PMP or Monier, Albany the 19 October 1752."

Prominent traders like Robert Sanders used Marie-Magdeleine and other porters with enough regularity that they knew each other well. She and Gaingoton were “Sauvage Du Saut,” Caughnawagas of Sault-Saint-Louis, who possessed experience trading and negotiating for goods, furs, and information. They dealt with counterpart traders in Montreal, and acted as go-betweens. In such relationships, trust was everything, because porters handled business on behalf of correspondents who might know little of one another; the absence of the Desauniers sisters thus in effect rendered the porters more influential and more crucial to successful transactions. A glimpse of this role can be deduced from a passage in a letter from Sanders sent to Mons. XII in July 1753, describing a porter in terms of physical feature by which she could be identified from other Mohawk women by the same name: “I send you presently by the present porter the *sauvagesse* Mari-Magdelene, she has an injury in one of her eyes, she told me that you know each other well.”<sup>404</sup> Both merchants knew this porter and wished to clarify precisely who she was and that she was trustworthy.

Also hidden within the pages of Robert Sanders’s curious 1750s letterbook was a language of smuggling. The merchant and his associates often began each exchange explaining that they had sent “a barrel of oysters,”<sup>405</sup> or some other favor. These, along letters, goods, and furs were often in barrels, packets, or crates marked with the merchant’s symbol, “marked DND,”<sup>406</sup> as with the barrel of oysters above. Such marking was not necessarily strange. Most companies maintained a mark in order to demystify a laden canoe or ship with hundreds or thousands of vessels. Large cargoes could prove difficult to retrieve even with an itemized manifest. What was strange in these cases is that most of the contraband goods, especially those

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<sup>404</sup> Ibid., “Mons. XII [Drawing of smoldering pipe], Albany, 6 July 1753.”

<sup>405</sup> Ibid., “Monsieur DND, Albany the 7 October 1752.” It is possible that some of the references to trade goods in the letters, for example to “oysters,” were themselves coded to conceal the commodities exchanged.

<sup>406</sup> Ibid.



personally requested by one of Sanders's correspondents arrived "*dans un cachette rouge*," "in a red box [crate]." <sup>407</sup>

Several significant points arise here about the "*cachette rouge*" a term that Sanders employed regularly to describe the container in which he sent his correspondents' goods in the 1750s. Even Sanders's spelling is significant. It is likely the New Yorker's French was poor so that he simply misspelled *cassette* meaning a small shipping crate or trunk. These were common in New France for transporting trade goods as they fit easily into canoes. Another explanation could be that the term was a play on words with *cache* meaning to hide. Indeed, the way in which Mayor Sanders used "*cachettes rouges*" hid plenty and mattered greatly in the contraband trade of the 1750s. <sup>408</sup>

Red milk paint often adorned boxes or trunks especially in New France. Rarely was the same true with typical shipping crates, or *cassettes*. Sanders developed a system where even if he sent an entire shipment of goods northward in exchange for the rich peltries he received, he made the special deliveries instantly recognizable and retrievable for his clients on any end of the trade corridor. It is difficult to ascertain if this practice was widespread, or if Sanders was the outlier. Such measures had the potential, at least, to work efficiently, particularly if the porters entrusted with their transport were illiterate. Precious cargoes were separated by their special container making them easily identifiable by the recipient while remaining ordinary enough under the gaze of any colonial official who was inclined to enforce trade restrictions.

Sanders's letterbook suggests that while the removal of the Desauniers sisters from trade may have made the exchange of contraband goods and furs more complex on the Montreal-

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<sup>407</sup> Ibid., "Monsieur DND, Albany 11 October 1752."

<sup>408</sup> On *cassettes*, small trunks, crates, or chests, see Charles E. Hanson, Jr., "The Trader's Cassette," *Museum of the Fur Trade Quarterly* 10.4 (Winter 1974); Angela and Jeff Gotfred, "Material Culture Compendium," *Northwest Journal* <http://www.northwestjournal.ca/X2.htm> [accessed April 6, 2011]. Both of these sources refer primarily to nineteenth-century fur trade boxes, but these were common in the French era though few if any remain.

Albany corridor, the trade itself continued, and may even have involved increasing numbers of independent Mohawk agents. Mohawk women traders continued to trade with the familiar European players at either end of the trade corridor with whom they forged lasting relationships over the decades. Successful women traders permitted *gantowisas* in Haudenosaunee towns to distribute luxury goods like woolens and wampum. Mohawk women also continued to be discerning consumers of European goods, carefully dictating to merchants and importers the colors, quality, and style of goods coming in.<sup>409</sup> Native women possessed both entrepreneurial spirit and diplomatic acumen that served the Haudenosaunee well at a time when French and British officials sought Haudenosaunee favor. With the Desauniers in exile and their correspondent Lydius increasingly on the sidelines, the flow of trade goods and furs merely found new channels. Traders might come and go, but *la traite illégale* could not be stopped.<sup>410</sup>

#### DISPOSSESSING INDIANS: A NEW LOW FOR J.H. LYDIUS

John Hendricks Lydius still operated a fur trade business in 1752, but not as briskly as before King George's War, for the departure of the Desauniers sisters changed his position. Instead of working diligently to fill the void left by the Desauniers by recruiting a substitute partner in trade, however, Lydius instead used relationships and avenues formed during King George's War to earn his fortune in new ways. During the early 1750s John Hendricks Lydius ceded his position in the fur trade to William Johnson and others and instead turned his attention to defrauding Indians of their lands as an entrée to large-scale land speculation and the development of his vast land holdings near Wood Creek.

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<sup>409</sup> Ronnie Reitter, Seneca Nation, Interview with author, Ganondagan New York State Historic Site, Victor New York, June 29, 2011. Ms. Reitter, cultural park ranger stated, "When I talk about trade I include women's influence in dictating trade. I am always interest in the ribbon, thread, cloth, and blankets . These made life easier."

<sup>410</sup> NYHS, Robert Sanders, *Letterbook* , Albany, 1752-58.

Save for his fort being burned to ashes in 1745, one could say that John Hendricks Lydius fared better from King George's War than did his associates to the North. Unlike some cultural intermediaries who only acted as guides or scouts during colonial wars, Lydius earned the rank of provincial colonel. Lydius honed his translation skills in Mohawk and Algonquian dialects during this campaign and gained more reputation among the British as a diplomat; he also used his mercantile skills as a military contractor, providing trade goods as a diplomat to the Iroquois and provisions and other supplies to provincial soldiers in New York. The mastery of supply chains and distribution networks on both ends of the riverine highway that Lydius had acquired in time of peace served him well in time of war. If the Iroquois porters who were the backbone of the trade continued undaunted to make the same journey north to Caughnawaga and back to Albany that they had made, war provided the opportunity Lydius needed to emerge not just as a trader, but a seasoned officer, a prominent New Yorker, and a wealthy man.<sup>411</sup>

As always, growing success increased in the potential dangers Lydius faced. Just as the government of New France devised a way to be rid of the demoiselles Desautiers, Lydius's success was read in the context of his reputation as a ruthless, dangerously immoral operator. People respected his views on Indian affairs simply due to the fact that he had lived among them longer than most colonists. The warm relationship between William Johnson and Lydius had soured by the end of King George's War but Lydius still commanded political and commercial capital in colonial New York in 1750. The lieutenant-governor of New York, Cadwallader Colden, recommended Lydius and William Johnson as hosts to Pehr Kalm when the Swedish

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<sup>411</sup> "Boston, December 2," Philadelphia: *American Weekly Mercury*, December 1745, Issue 1355, Pg. 2, in *America's Historical Newspapers, including Early American Newspapers, Series I, 1690-1876*, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com> (accessed January 28, 2008); "Boston," Boston: *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, December 06, 1745, Issue 2276, Pg. 2, in *America's Historical Newspapers, including Early American Newspapers, Series I, 1690-1876*, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com> (accessed January 28, 2008); Benjamin Doolittle, *A Short Narrative of the Mischief Done by the French and Indian Enemy*, Boston: 1750, in *Early American Imprints*, Vol. I: 1639-1800, Evans 6483 (2 of 2) – 6491, Microfiche.

scientist traveled through New York and Canada in 1750. Lydius gave Kalm a warm reception, even if his own role in commerce along the riverine highway had faded.<sup>412</sup>

Despite the pair's cooled commercial association, in 1751 Johnson extended patronage on behalf of Lydius's kin to New York Governor George Clinton.

The Bearer hereof is a French young gentleman, Son of Mr. DeQuaneay an Eminent Merchant of Canada Who has been for these 14 years past att Missipipi and Ilinois from whence he came last Fall by the Way of Oswego. He has lived ever Since at Mr. Lydius' whose Wife is his Aunt, or near Relation. He having an inclination to Settle here, begged I would write a few lines to acquaint Yr. Excellency of his resolution hoping to have Yr. Excellency's permission, and protection. That thereby he may be able to follow business.<sup>413</sup>

The letter is revealing for several reasons. Johnson spoke more fondly of Madame Geneviève Massé Lydius than of Lydius himself, as had been the case in previous letters. This could reflect Madame Lydius's sustained connections with kin in the *pays d'en haut* at Michilimackinac, Detroit, and elsewhere, combined with her links to her aunt Madame Isabelle Montour and cousin Andrew Montour. Johnson also demonstrated a familiarity with the French interior and the increase in the importance of Oswego, attitudes that reflected the rising tensions between France and Britain over the fur trade and the North American interior in the 1750s.

The alliance between Lydius and Massachusetts Governor William Shirley had grown during King George's War and continued to endure in its aftermath, thereby increasing William Johnson's enmity towards Lydius. Johnson's growing prominence, supported by the fabulous wartime success of his uncle and benefactor (and now Admiral) Peter Warren, made Lydius less useful to the DeLanceys, and left him with fewer allies. His reputation for sharp business practices and a certain carelessness in matters of legality and morality made him relatively easy

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<sup>412</sup> Cadwallader Colden, *The Letters and Papers of Cadwallader Colden*, 9 vols., (New York: Printed for the New York Historical Society, 1918-1937), IX: 10.

<sup>413</sup> "Sir William Johnson to Governor Clinton [George], March 29, 1751," George Clinton Papers, Box 11, Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

for his former New York associates to abandon, even as Governor Shirley and other potential new allies, less wary of Lydius's foibles, sought his aid in acquiring Native lands.<sup>414</sup>

By 1753 unscrupulous land purchases from the Iroquois dominated many conversations of frontier business. The Kayaderosseras<sup>415</sup> affair – regarding a 800,000 acre tract of land outside of Albany also known as Mohawk Flats – rocked trade and diplomacy between the British and the Iroquois. A syndicate of Albany merchants, the Kayaderosseras Partners, claimed to have made the initial purchase of these lands for only £60 in 1703. By the 1750s the Kayaderosseras Partners drew both British and Iroquois criticism for their illegally purchased and sold lands. Lydius served as a key actor in these negotiations gaining the envy and the ire of many. Despite legal problems that embroiled the Kayaderosseras Partners for decades many of them continued to sell titles to lands within the tract and profit from these speculative transactions. The treaties that made the sales possible were so confusing and diffuse that justice for the Mohawk people affected was all but impossible.<sup>416</sup>

Lydius' role in the Kayaderosseras affair is certain but unclear. He had long used such methods to swindle the Mohawks as in his original 1732 deed for his tract of over 600,000 acres along Wood Creek. In the 1750s Lydius illegally sold nearly 800 small tracts within this property on Otter and Wood Creeks in upstate New York. He turned a tidy profit and

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<sup>414</sup> William Shirley to Thomas Dunbar, August 12, 1755, CWS, 233; Milton Hamilton, *Sir William Johnson: Colonial American, 1715-1763* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1976), 130-131; Fintan O'Toole, *White Savage: William Johnson and the Invention of America* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2005), 121-124; William Schutz, *William Shirley: King's Governor of Massachusetts* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1961).

<sup>415</sup> This references New York lands near Kayaderosseras Creek. Alternative spellings include: Keydarosseras, Kayadarusseras, and Kaniadarusseras.

<sup>416</sup> Georgiana C. Nammack, *Fraud, Politics, and the Dispossession of Indians: The Iroquois Land Frontier in the Colonial Period* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1969), 53-69; Robert C. Newbold, *The Albany Congress and Plan of Union of 1754* (New York: Vantage Press, 1955), 64-71; Eric Hinderaker, *The Two Hendricks: Unraveling a Mohawk Mystery* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 238-239.

encouraged colonial settlement on this Native ground.<sup>417</sup> Lydius's unscrupulous dealings tainted British-Mohawk relations in 1753 nearly to the point of breaking the covenant chain on the eve of the most decisive confrontation between the French and British empires.<sup>418</sup>

It might seem that the confluence of political and social forces in the aftermath of King George's War that resulted in the compelled departure of the Desauniers sisters and the marginalization of John Henry Lydius, would have proven sufficient to quash smuggling altogether between Montreal and Albany. This did not occur. More than ever before the prominence and importance of Haudenosaunee men and women and the pull of market forces ensured that smuggling endured despite (and in part, due to) resurging Anglo-French tensions. Haudenosaunee traders, porters, and go-betweens remained the beneficiaries of illicit trade along the riverine highway even at a time when factors coalesced to challenge all they had built.

### THE ALBANY CONGRESS

Despite the enduring contraband trade, most Mohawks watched in horror as unscrupulous land deals transacted between colonists and illegitimate Iroquois players stripped the people of more of their land and political leverage. Hendrick (Theyanoguin) and fifteen other Mohawk headmen took decisive action in June 1753, meeting with Governor George Clinton and members of the New York Assembly at Ft. George on Manhattan. The group aimed to express their outrage at English treachery against their Mohawk allies and the hollowness of English

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<sup>417</sup> "A True Extract Examin'd Per John Colden, Clerk of Albany City," April 4, 1750, in Cadwallader Colden, *The Letters and Papers of Cadwallader Colden...* (New York: Printed for the New York Historical Society, 1918-1937), IV: 202-203. This is an affidavit testifying to the legitimacy of Lydius' 1732 claim to lands amongst the Mohawk on Otter and Wood Creeks. Ft. Edward was built on the remnants of Ft. Lydius by the British Army in September 1755; JP, 1: 783, 861; 2: 63-66; Corbett, *Clash of Cultures*, 219-221.

<sup>418</sup> Timothy Shannon, *Indians and Colonists at the Crossroads of Empire: The Albany Congress of 1754* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), 169; Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 154-1763* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000), 38; Francis Jennings, *Empire of Fortune: Crowns, Colonies, and Tribes in the Seven Years' War in America* (New York: Norton, 1988), 81, 102.

promises made in the wake of King George's War. Mohawks had room to complain and yet what followed disclosed how the ability to negotiate had already decreased in a post-war world.<sup>419</sup>

After days of speeches and verbal fencing Theyanoguin delivered his most stinging rebuke of Governor Clinton's New York:

Brother, By & By you'l expect to see the Nations down from which you shall not see, for as soon as we come home we will send up a Belt of Wampum to our Brothers the 5 Nations to acquaint them the Covenant Chain is broken between you and us. So brother you are not to expect to hear of me any more, and Brother we desire to hear no more of you. And we shall no longer acquaint you with any News or affairs as we used to do....<sup>420</sup>

English land frauds (most notably the Kayaderosseras venture) and English indifference in the face of Mohawk service and generosity had driven Theyanoguin to this last resort, the ominous declaration that the "Covenant Chain is broken between you and us." The English and especially New Yorkers realized that they could not afford to lose this beneficial and delicate relationship with the Iroquois at a time when it mattered greatly. And yet, few colonists rushed to the aid of their Mohawk allies.

Open conflict resumed between the British and the French near the Forks of the Ohio in the spring of 1754, with the opening shots of the Seven Years' War. In July 1754, it was an act of diplomacy, not war, that held more immediate ramifications for illicit trade between British and French America and the Native peoples who transacted it. Representatives of seven British North American colonies, imperial officials, and representatives of the Six Nations converged at

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<sup>419</sup> Hinderaker, *Two Hendricks*, 193-200; Patricia Bonomi, *A Factious People: Politics and Society in Colonial New York* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 140-158.

<sup>420</sup> Conference Minutes, Ft. George, June 12-16, 1753, NYCD, 6: 788.

southern terminus of the riverine highway. The main goal of the conference was to renew ties between the Iroquois League and the British government. The Albany Congress held great repercussions for illicit trade and for John Hendricks Lydius.<sup>421</sup>

The Albany Congress, although typically treated by modern historians in terms of the Plan of Union proposed there by Benjamin Franklin, was significant for more than a plan of common defense against the French. The Board of Trade convened the Albany Congress as a great treaty council with key Native allies of the British, especially the Iroquois Confederacy, in an attempt to repair deteriorated Anglo-Indian relationships in the context of a looming conflict with France. The essential imperial aim of the Congress was to reassure the Haudenosaunee that their father, Britain's king, recognized that Native power and prerogative were still of vital importance in the northeastern woodlands.<sup>422</sup>

If the official intention of the Albany Congress was to restore harmony threatened by the aggressive actions of land speculators like Lydius, however, Lydius himself saw the conference as an opportunity to pursue his own, and his employers', designs to perpetrate yet more schemes to acquire Indian land (in this case, land in central Pennsylvania) for white settlement.<sup>423</sup>

Timothy Woodbridge of the Susquehannah Company of Connecticut hired Lydius to purchase Native lands in Pennsylvania at the Albany Congress. Lydius likely employed liquor and cash to acquire title to thousands of acres of land in the Wyoming River Valley. Eighteen Mohawks

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<sup>421</sup> Timothy Shannon, *Indians and Colonists at the Crossroads of Empire: The Albany Congress of 1754* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), 83-93; Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 53-58; George F.G. Stanley, *New France: The Last Phase, 1744-1760*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1968), 52-54; Nammack, *Fraud, Politics, and the Dispossession of Indians*, 39-43; Douglas Leach, *Arms for Empire A Military History of the British Colonies in North America, 1607-1763*. New York: Macmillan, 1973), 333-336.

<sup>422</sup> Shannon, *Indians and Colonists at the Crossroads of Empire*, 5-6; Susan Kalter, ed, *Benjamin Franklin, Pennsylvania, and the First Nations: The Treaties of 1736-1762* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 26-27; Newbold, *The Albany Congress and Plan of Union of 1754*, 24-26; Walter Isaacson, *Benjamin Franklin: An American Life* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2003), 160-162;

<sup>423</sup> Schultz, *William Shirley*, 180-184; Newbold, *The Albany Congress*, 29-31; Shannon, *Indians and Colonists at the Crossroads of Empire*, 191-192.



signed the treaty with Connecticut though several of the same had just signed agreements over the same lands with Pennsylvania. John Henry Lydius served as main negotiator and his son Martin Lydius witnessed the treaty that was transacted behind closed doors at the Lydius home while the Albany Congress was meeting.<sup>424</sup>

The nature of Lydius's actions on behalf of the Susquehannah Company at the Albany Congress became clearer as the controversy generated contestations and litigations over the next ten years. In one deposition Lydius recounted

That some Time in the Month of July A Dom 1754 Timothy Woodbridge Esq<sup>r</sup> who was employ'd by the people of Connecticut Colony To make a purchase of the five nations of a tract of Land lying on Susquahannah as contained in the forgoing deed asked my assistance in the prosecution of Said purchase and the Said Woodbridge left in my hands a considerable sum of money to the amount of a Thousand or eleven hundred Spanish dollars To pay such Sachims of the five Nations that should appear To make sale of the aforeSaid lands for Their several Tribes. Notice being given To the Said Tribes of Indians That if they were dispos'd To make sale of the Tract of Land Contained in the forgoing deed They might receive their pay at Albany at the dwelling house and by the hands of the deponant [John Henry Lydius] Accordingly as the Sachems of the Several Tribes Came To the deponants house on Said business The deponant agreed with such as appear'd To dispose of their interests in the premisses from time to time for such sums as they were Satisfyed with and the same was paid by the deponant untill The afore said sum was paid afterward the deponant sent To go forward with Said purchase and receivd between four and five hundred dollars as afore Said and Still further supplys were remitted untill the deponant was enabled To pay The whole Stipulated for with the Several Sachems of the Several Tribes which whole payment That The deponant made was To the amount of one Thousand Seven hundred and five Spanish Dollars.<sup>425</sup>

Once more Lydius had used his political and commercial connections to succeed, having made the above testimony before Albany's Mayor Sybrant Van Schaick, who corroborated Lydius's account.

Further The afore Said Sybrant Van Schaick Jun<sup>r</sup> Testifies and Says that when he was Call'd To evidence To the Signing of Several of the Sachems To the forgoing deed at the

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<sup>424</sup> Nammack, *Fraud, Politics, and the Dispossession of Indians*, 39-43; Hinderker, *The Two Hendricks*, 246-247; Shannon, *Indians and Colonists at the Crossroads of Empire*, 168-171. The Treaty for the Wyoming Valley between the Susquehannah Company and Mohawks of July 11, 1754 appears in Julian P. Boyd and R.J. Taylor, eds., *The Susquehannah Company Papers*, 11 vols. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962-71), I: 101-116.

<sup>425</sup> Boyd and Taylor, eds., *The Susquehannah Company Papers*, I: 120.

House of Co<sup>ll</sup> John Lydius in Albany He Saw a large bagg of mony deliver'd To the Indians by The Said Lydius in consideration of Said purchase which bagg the Deponent Judged To Contain Three or four hundred Spanish dollars, and further Saith not.<sup>426</sup>

And still another Albany resident, James Sharpe, came to Lydius's defense testifying on his behalf.

Further The afore Said James Sharpe deposeth and Saith that when he was Called To Evidence To Several Sachems Signing The foregoing Deed of Sale he Saw the Indians that Signed The Said Deed counting money in the Said Lydius's Stoop at his door and appear'd To be possess'd of a large Sum and further Saith not.<sup>427</sup>

This elusive paper trail illustrates the best information about Lydius's dealings with the Mohawks at the Albany Congress of July 1754. Lydius had carefully selected those who signed the document. Lydius knew some of them and evidently used alcohol and a bribe to get what he wanted.<sup>428</sup> As a whole, perhaps Lydius's dealings may be seen as one of the most successful parts of the Albany Congress. Governor Clinton and colonial politicians delivered speeches that did little to regain Iroquois alliance. Mohawks rallied behind Theyanoguin in deeper distrust of colonists. Though Lydius's fraudulent treaty would later be voided, it further soured relations between Iroquois and the British Empire and Lydius left the conference with greater influence, money, and the hatred of many more.<sup>429</sup>

Another significant part of these dealings was the way in which John Lydius once again thrived by navigating his way through a borderland, this time through a borderland of diplomatic paperwork. William Shirley and Timothy Woodbridge trusted Lydius to do what he had done

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<sup>426</sup> Ibid., I: 120.

<sup>427</sup> Ibid., I: 121.

<sup>428</sup> Rather than look at the fifteen Mohawks who signed the document as traitors to their people it is important to remember that protecting one's family in the face of growing colonial power was not a bad option. Often it was the only option. Those who had just deeded the same lands to Pennsylvania also likely had no problem making more money for signing another piece of paper, the power of which they hardly legitimized.

<sup>429</sup> Jennings, *Empire of Fortune*, 101-110; Shannon, *Indians and Colonists at the Crossroads of Empire*, 191-192; Francis Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies from its Beginnings to the Lancaster Treaty of 1744*. (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1984), 369-70; Newbold, *The Albany Congress and Plan of Union of 1754*, 82-84.

before, get Indian men to sign away lands no matter the cost. Lydius recognized the leverage to be found between colonial governments at the very meeting meant to unite them. Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and New York disputed boundaries between each other and Native nations including the Lenni Lenape and the Iroquois, including the fertile Wyoming Valley. Lydius knew that during the hustle of the Albany Congress delegates would not notice him hosting Mohawk men at his home. Moreover, he recognized how once his illegitimate document was signed, lands could be sold by his employer, the Susquehannah Company of Connecticut, even as Pennsylvania contested the document and the sales it encouraged. Even political allies aided Lydius in the face of almost certain ruin, a tactic that worked again, but would not do so indefinitely.<sup>430</sup>

The Lords of Trade reacted bitterly to Lydius's actions at the Albany Congress. "There is reason to believe the last Pensilvania Purchase, tho' agreed to at a publick meeting, is a matter of no small Grievance to many of the six Nations, and so disgusting to the Delaware and Shawanese Indians, as hath probably occasioned those Indians now ravaging our back settlements."<sup>431</sup> Lydius's New York supporters did not mind dispossessing Delawares, Shawnees, or Pennsylvanians of land. Conrad Weiser, Pennsylvania's agent and the most knowledgeable Indian diplomat in contemporary North America, however, was convinced of Lydius' deceit and thought that this great assault to Native sovereignty would lead to a massive Indian war. Disagreements over Lydius' land transactions and ensuing litigation underscored the heightened squabbling between British colonies in a period devastated by violence.<sup>432</sup>

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<sup>430</sup> Nammack, *Fraud, Politics, and the Dispossession of Indians*, 39-43; Hinderker, *The Two Hendricks*, 246-247; Shannon, *Indians and Colonists at the Crossroads of Empire*, 168-171.

<sup>431</sup> "Some thoughts upon the British Indian Interest in North America, more particularly as it relates to the Northern Confederation commonly called the six nations – Keydarosseras Connojoary and the Oneida Carrying Place," 1755, *NYCD*, VII: 18.

<sup>432</sup> Thomas Young, *Some Reflections on the Disputes between New York, New-Hampshire, and Col. John Henry Lydius of Albany*, (New Haven: Benjamin Mecom, 1764) in *Early American Imprints*, Vol. I: 1639-1800, Evans

The very way in which Lydius counted on the divisions between British colonies to permit Connecticut to sell tracts in the Wyoming Valley was the same tactic he had used to smuggle goods along the riverine highway years before. Turmoil soon developed between Connecticut, Pennsylvania, New York, and Massachusetts over their borders and the legitimacy of Indian land claims thereby disrupting any attempts at uniting British North America. The tensions clouded the British Crown's very ability to demarcate and manage its empire, a problem with implications that would become fully evident only after the conclusion of the war that was beginning in Pennsylvania.

The British government aimed to consolidate its North American empire and to secure its alliance with Iroquois League, an alliance it had neglected and let fall victim to land speculators like Lydius. The British fell short of both their goals at Albany in July 1754. Conflicting interests divided British North American colonies, government actions and antipathy towards the Iroquois revealed increasingly unjust policies towards Native Americans, and the borders the council meant to outline were already under assault by French forces in the West.<sup>433</sup>

Not long before the Congress broke up, word arrived by Iroquois messengers that a detachment of Virginia provincial soldiers under George Washington had been defeated by a larger, better equipped French force, plentifully supported by Indian allies, at Great Meadows in western Pennsylvania. The following year would see further clashes of arms between the British and French empires near that spot, and from them the great conflict later called the Seven Years' War would unfold, altering forever the face of empire in North America. In the summer of 1754, neither Lydius nor any other American colonist had reason to suspect what vast changes lay ahead. All expected the conflict to end in stalemate as all previous Anglo-French conflicts

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9888-9889, Microfiche; Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 78; Paul A.W. Wallace, *Conrad Weiser, 1696-1760, Friend of Colonist and Mohawk* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1945), 361.

<sup>433</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 77-85.

during the past six decades. Contraband trade would continue to thrive, British and French competition would encourage Native peoples to seek favor from both powers, and the *gantowisas* would continue to make the choices they believed were best for their people. At its onset in 1754, no one could predict the decisive outcome of the Seven Years' War, nor the critical ways in which it would remake life along the riverine highway.

## EPILOGUE

### THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR AND BEYOND

By 1755 the departure of the Desauniers sisters from Montreal and the complete identification of John Henry Lydius with William Shirley in New York changed the cast of characters in the story of smuggling between the St. Lawrence and the Hudson even as a new Anglo-French war flared into violence on the Pennsylvania frontier. This change marks a logical spot to end this dissertation, for the Seven Years' War did in fact inaugurate a new phase in the history of smuggling along the riverine corridor. But the larger narrative of trade, legal and illegal, along that corridor, did not end with 1755, and indeed has not ended today. In the story that comes after this one, and which necessarily grows out of it, the general outlines remain familiar.

Haudenosaunee people continued to ply the waters and pathways of the borderlands during the Seven Years' War as they had during the War of Austrian Succession, shifting the goods transported once again in favor of the weapons, ammunition, and information that commanded premium prices during wartime. Haudenosaunee women and men continued to trade and transport goods, but did so less frequently and often moved by more westerly routes. The story of the Iroquois trade thus did not end, but rather altered, subtly, as the traders and travelers of the borderland responded to changing circumstances, opportunities, and challenges.

Similarly the stories of the Desauniers sisters and that of John Henry Lydius were not finished, but their venues of action and influence had changed, just as the volume of exchange, the meanings of trade, and the routes taken between Montreal and Albany changed in response to the war's events. The Desauniers sisters had been expelled from New France, but were soon ensconced in a new trading house in La Rochelle and doing their best to adapt to the challenges

and opportunities of wartime commerce. Lydius, who (it seemed) could hardly help himself, continued seek profit as relentlessly as ever, in land dealings, trade, military contracting, and anywhere else he could find it.

Lydius had powerful enemies, who worked hard to bring him down and, with him, his patron William Shirley. The Oneida Chief Conochquiesie condemned Lydius for his land dealings while addressing William Johnson and others in council: “Brother, you promised you would keep this fire place clean from all filth and that no snake should come into this Council Room. That Man Sitting there (Pointing to Coll: Lyddius) is a Devil and has stole our Lands, he takes Indians slyly by the Blanket one at a time, and when they are drunk, puts money in their Bosoms, and perswades them to sign deeds for our lands upon the Susquehana which we will not ratify nor suffer to be settled by any means.”<sup>434</sup>

Conochquiesie articulated Native sentiments towards Lydius that had been growing since the end of King George’s War in 1748. This condemnation corroborated what most had known about Lydius for decades, but until now colonial governments and imperial authorities had ignored his shady dealings, or even facilitated them, insofar as they could personally benefit. What had changed in 1754 and 1755 was that Lydius had crossed powerful figures, particularly his one-time trading partner William Johnson. Johnson’s response to Conochquiesie made it clear that he and Lydius had permanently parted ways: “If Coll: Lyddius hath done as you report and which I am afraid is in a great measure true, I think, he is very faulty, and that nobody should attempt to settle lands upon such unfair purchases.”<sup>435</sup>

Johnson of course, had reason to appease Iroquois leaders, and under other circumstances might have stopped with that. But because Lydius had cast his lot with Shirley, against Johnson

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<sup>434</sup> Mount Johnson, 3 July 1755, NYCD, VI: 984.

<sup>435</sup> Ibid., VI: 987.

and the DeLanceys, Johnson complained of them both to the Lords of Trade: “to this man [Lydius] he [Shirley, in his office as commander-in-chief of British forces in North America] gave a Coll.’s Commission over the Indians and set him up to oppose my interest and management of them...”<sup>436</sup> Shirley had indeed done so principally because he believed that to fight a war that was veering dangerously out of control on the New York frontier he needed someone to deal with the Mohawks, and that Johnson, as a DeLancey ally, could not be trusted. He was right about Johnson and the DeLanceys, who were even then pulling every lever they could, in the world of British politics, to have Shirley dismissed, and who in less than a year’s time would succeed in doing so.

Shirley was wrong, of course, to trust Lydius, whose sole recommendation was that he could speak Mohawk, and who was far too concerned in serving his own interest in commodities and land speculation to devote much attention to the war effort anyway. Lydius also had more opponents than just Johnson and the DeLanceys; the Penn family, too, distrusted him for his role played on behalf of the Susquehannah Company, and opposed both him and his patron, Shirley. The combined opposition of some of the most powerful and well-connected men in Anglo-America helped destroy Shirley, and those who supported him. When Shirley was relieved of his military command by Lord Loudon and recalled to England in 1757 under vehement suspicion of corruption and incompetence, Lydius was not himself charged with any crime, but was left without any powerful patron to protect him and forward his interests. He was, as never before, isolated.

In the end Lydius’s remarkable powers of persuasion had not failed him, but they could not preserve his reputation or his place in British North America. Whereas his business acumen and cultural knowledge permitted him to supply arms and trade goods to both British and

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<sup>436</sup> Major General Johnson to the Lords of Trade, Lake George, 3 September 1755, NYCD, VI: 994.



French-allied Natives during King George's War, the circumstances of this new war – in which the St. Lawrence was open to French vessels until 1758 and the commander-in-chief of British forces in North America located his headquarters in New York – made it impossible for Lydius to smuggle on the riverine corridor. Bereft of supporters, universally suspected by colonial politicians whom he had given no reason to trust him, but not quite so insignificant that he might not yet prove to be of use, Lydius entered a period of eclipse that lasted until the conquest of Canada.<sup>437</sup>

Then, and only then, when he had no conceivable use and had earned the enmity of one of the most powerful men in the British Atlantic world, William Johnson, could Lydius be attacked directly. In 1761, Lieutenant-Governor Cadwallader Colden of New York issued a proclamation that challenged Lydius's ownership of the vast lands of the Otter Creek tract. In part Colden targeted Lydius because the trader had flouted the law for decades, and he hoped to keep the corruption he identified with Lydius from spreading further; hence his proclamation gave "forewarning and strictly prohibiting all Persons, by Pretence or Colour of Right or Title under the said John Henry Lydius, to enter into, to take Possession of the said two tracts of land...."<sup>438</sup>

Meanwhile Lydius's shady dealings in the Wyoming Valley also came under scrutiny as the Penn family and its supporters sought to chastise him for his instrumental part in the Susquehannah Affair. "It may be true," admitted James Tilghman in 1761, "that they [agents of the Susquehannah Company] did obtain a deed of some Indians there [Wyoming Valley], but it is well known to have been done in a clandestine manner, by the intervention of one

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<sup>437</sup> Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 154-1763* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000), 110; *The Susquehannah Company Papers, Volume III, 1768-1769*, III: xxv.

<sup>438</sup> Cadwallader Colden, *A Proclamation*, 18 February, 1761 in *Early American Imprints*, Vol. I: 1639-1800, Evans 8947 (7 of 7)-8951, Microfiche.

Lydius....”<sup>439</sup> Imperial officials eventually determined that Lydius’ land acquisitions on the Susquehannah were too flagrantly unscrupulous to overlook, and voided them, but not before Connecticut settlers had tried to make good on their claim by settling the Wyoming Valley and much blood had been shed at the outset of Pontiac’s War by Indians who had no intention of letting them remain. Indeed violence would continue to afflict the region for a generation: between the Connecticut claimants and Pennsylvania whites in the so-called Yankee-Pennamite War of 1769, between Yankees and Indians and Tories during the American Revolutionary War, and finally between Yankees and Pennsylvanians again in a post-Revolutionary spasm of land riots in the 1780s.

King George’s War had offered enterprising Haudenosaunee women, Lydius, and the Desauniers sisters enough space between colliding empires to profit from the illegal fur trade. The decisive British victory over the French in the Seven Years’ War altered the landscape of opportunity by annihilating the French empire in North American. British domination of the fur trade now left Native trappers, traders, and porters with only British buyers and removed all issues of illegality by incorporating Canada in the British empire as the province of Quebec. The Treaty of Paris of 1763 seemingly settled all issues of control over the fur trade by subjecting all Native nations east of the Mississippi, from the Gulf of Mexico to Hudson’s Bay, to British hegemony.<sup>440</sup>

At the time of this decisive loss for French empire and commerce, the Demoiselles Desauniers had been importing and exporting goods for a dozen years in La Rochelle, one of the busiest Atlantic ports in France. Although more research in French archives would be necessary to determine what the precise scope and character of their activities were, it is clear that their

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<sup>439</sup> Argument (by James Tilghman) Against the Connecticut Settlement, March 7, 1761, *The Susquehannah Company Papers, Volume III, 1768-1769*, III: 113.

<sup>440</sup> Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 505-506.

brother Pierre Trottier-Desauniers had already established the family in France in 1747 and that the Charest brothers used influence to quickly re-establish their spouses in La Rochelle. These entrepreneurs likely felt the economic and social shockwaves of their county's colonial losses in the Seven Years' War, but not as they would have, had they remained in Montreal and New Caughnawaga.

In 1764 the Desauniers' tale took a curious turn that hints at the resiliency of the family and the persistence of French imperial ambitions in the Atlantic world after the Treaty of Paris had definitively reshaped the future development of North America. Marie-Anne and Marie-Madeleine remained in La Rochelle guiding their enterprise to further success in Atlantic commerce until their deaths in the 1780s. Marguerite Desauniers, however, had been widowed by the death of Joseph Dufy Charest in 1763 and so on August 12, 1764 married Charles Josué Eury de La Pérelle. Soon thereafter the couple set sail for the new colony of La Guyane in South America, where they prospered and established themselves as one of the founding families of French Guiana. In 1775 Pérelle returned to La Rochelle to be inducted into the prestigious military order of St. Louis and a year later was assigned as the commandant of Martinique. The commandant died in 1779 leaving Marguerite Desauniers Pérelles a sizeable pension and links to Guyane, La Rochelle, and Canada. The Desauniers demonstrated their ability to navigate channels of legitimate and contraband trade, not merely along the riverine highway, but at nearly every corner of the French Atlantic World.

Following the Seven Years' War Lydius faced declining opportunities. He pled his case for keeping all his American land holdings before the English court in 1764, but to no avail. His detractors continued to criticize his shady land acquisitions. "The Deed taken by Lydius was

unduly obtained & that no regard ought to be paid to it,”<sup>441</sup> reported William Samuel Johnson, the agent of Connecticut, to the Susquehannah Company Committee of the Connecticut Assembly in 1769. Iroquois leaders in particular continued to criticize Lydius. “He spoke to them whenever he met them; never with more than ten,” noted Oneida headman Tiahogwando at the Albany Treaty of 1775, “from these he pretended to make a purchase of that tract.”<sup>442</sup> In 1776 as word of rebellion spread throughout British North America he and his son Martin traveled to Europe, evidently in search of commercial opportunity. They evidently found it in the Netherlands, for by the 1780s the two were able to settle in the fashionable London quarter of Kensington, where they remained.<sup>443</sup>

The four figures who earned the ire of so many never suffered irreparable harm at the hands of their opponents. Even trans-Atlantic deportation could not stop them. Lydius died in 1791 in a comfortable home; Marguerite (Desauniers) Perrelle died a wealthy widow in Martinique in 1784; Marie-Anne and Marie-Madeleine Desauniers died in 1788 in La Rochelle. Their involvement in illicit trade between New York and New France had honed their skills, added to their capital reserves, and placed them in positions that enabled them to complete rare long lives in distant corners of the Atlantic World. The world of contraband trade their lives disclosed illustrates the significant contributions of Haudenosaunee people along a riverine highway and the enduring importance of smuggling during times of peace and war between empires.<sup>444</sup> In the long run it was only the Haudenosaunee, abandoned by the British and thus

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<sup>441</sup> William Samuel Johnson to the Committee of the Susquehannah Company, London, March 10, 1769, *The Susquehannah Company Papers, Volume III, 1768-1769*, III: 90.

<sup>442</sup> At a Treaty began & held with the Indians of the Six United Nations at the city of Albany, on Friday the 25<sup>th</sup> of August, 1775, NYCD, VIII: 624.

<sup>443</sup> DCBO, Peter Moogk, s.v. “Lydius, John Hendricks,” Vol. IV, <http://www.biographi.ca> [accessed January 22, 2008].

<sup>444</sup> 14 Octobre 1788 – Notoriété des défuntes [Marie-] Madeleine Desauniers, BANQ, Notaire: Louis Chaboillez (Montreal) CN601.S74 (reel) M-620.1182 (3291) Pg 1219-1223; DCBO, Moogk, s.v. “Lydius, John Hendricks;”

exposed in the end to the relentless imperialism of the United States, who ultimately paid in full the price of empire.

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